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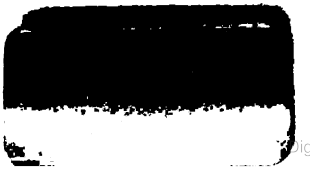

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WAYSIDE SKETCHES IN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

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WAYSIDE SKETCHES IN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

NINE LECTURES

WITH NOTES AND PREFACE

BY

CHARLES BIGG, D.D.

CANON OF CHRIST CHURCH
AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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PREFACE

THE three sets of Lectures which follow were delivered at different times and to different audiences. I have called them Wayside Sketches, because they had, at the time they were written, no more connection than the scenes which happen to catch the eye of a traveller upon a journey.

But a student's journey through the world of books is not a mere ramble in search of amusement. His mind is fixed upon one field of interest. He carries with him the lessons which he has already gathered, and tries to fit them on to the new ideas suggested by each fresh point of view.

So, when I come to read over these Lectures again, there appears to be a thread of connection running through the whole of them. They might have been called Essays on the Development of the Church. They refer to three great moments in that fateful process—the making of the mediæval system, the decay of the mediæval system, and the beginnings of modern Christianity.

The last triplet was suggested by the use which

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has recently been made of Jewel's famous Appeal to the Six Centuries. It has been thought that by adopting Jewel's standard we might find a way out of those disputes which have been distracting and tormenting the Church of England.

I have endeavoured to show that this most desirable object cannot be obtained by the method proposed. Every one of the characteristic features (or, as some would say, of the abuses) of the mediæval Western Church existed in germ before the end of the sixth century. In germ—that is to say, they were held by some, and were gradually making their way towards universal acceptance.

Now the decisive question is not how many people entertained these ideas when first they emerge into view, or at what date they obtained official recognition, because many great truths, for instance, the conception of the divine nature and the belief in the immortality of the soul, have a history, were themselves evolved, and gradually won their way to recognition in the Old Testament; while, on the other hand, many beliefs which all would admit to be false and unwholesome, for instance, the legalism of the Pharisees, have also a history, and evolved themselves in a manner which in outward appearance is exactly the same. Every

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belief, every institution, has its roots in the past, and may be called a development. Even reactions and revolutions fall under this category. The most conflicting forms of government, the most opposed philosophies, are yet the natural fruit of what has gone before, and it is the acknowledged task of the historian to trace the thread of continuity.

There is a development which produces a higher and finer organism, there is a development which issues in degradation. How shall we distinguish the one from the other? It is not an easy task, for the growth of the Church is not complete, and we are ourselves entangled in it.

May we not affirm that there is not, and never has been, any criterion except Scripture and Intelligence? Nobody really believes the Church to be infallible. Even within the six centuries there was one Council which no one received, there were Eastern Councils which were flouted by the West, and Western Councils which were flouted by the East. The Council of Trent relied upon the authority of the ancient Fathers in so far as it is consonant. But it is not consonant. There are very few points indeed upon which the ancient Fathers speak with one voice, and the points about which we are divided are not among these. To

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whatever quarter we turn for information about the history of the Church we find ourselves driven to discriminate, to weigh, to compare, to criticise. No student of antiquity will maintain that Clement of Rome, or Ignatius, or Justin, or Irenæus knew more than is to be found in the Bible. The language of Scripture, like that of every unsystematic book or set of books, calls for interpretation. It was so interpreted, and in the result the creeds were formulated. We know the men by whom this work was done, we know the texts upon which they relied, and the reasoning by which they elucidated the texts. By intelligence this important task was achieved, and by intelligence we can test the soundness of the conclusion. The Fathers of the four great Councils would have been indignant if any one had charged them with going beyond the plain sense of their authorities, or with adding to Scripture a new revelation of their own. Whether they did so or not is another question, but certainly they would not have admitted that they did.

The field of Development, as the word is generally used, is quite different from this. It embraces ritual, ceremonial, discipline, and a host of subordinate beliefs, some of which have a vague and distant relation to Scripture, while others have none

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at all. They would, one and all of them, possess little importance, if they had not been raised to the dignity of divine laws, and placed upon the same level as the Sabbath rules of the Pharisees, to which indeed they bear a close analogy.

Now, are they divine laws, or are they ecclesiastical bye-laws? This is the knot of all our difficulties, and the following Lectures may be regarded as a modest attempt to loosen it.

It is a controversial subject, but I trust nothing will be found here that can give reasonable offence. But there is no telling. What some regard as exceedingly important, I myself regard as indifferent, and this is always an irritating pose. But the desire of all right-minded men is to make things better, not to make them worse. This object has been kept in view throughout, and, if any expression is felt to be harsh or inconsiderate, I desire to express my regret beforehand.

C. BIGG.

CHRIST CHURCH,
March 9, 1906.

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WAYSIDE SKETCHES IN ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY

I

PRUDENTIUS

I PROPOSE in these lectures to draw your attention to three Latin ecclesiastical writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, Prudentius, Paulinus of Nola, and Sidonius Apollinaris. They are not theologians. Prudentius and Paulinus are mainly poets; Sidonius is mainly a letter-writer. The first two deal chiefly with Christian sentiment. They belong to the family of Vaughan, Herbert, and Keble, and in this way are of great theological importance, because they contributed largely to the emotional development of the Church. The third was called to play a considerable part in the tragedy of the downfall of Rome, and discharged his perilous duty with noble disinterestedness. All three were men of letters, leading figures in the first Renaissance. As soon as the Church was delivered from the

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haunting dread of persecution, art began to blossom: in the East, where we find Gregory Nazianzen, and in the West where a whole chorus of poets began to sing. It was a short-lived and peculiar spring, too near to classicalism to be quite conscious of its special vocation, and soon nipped in the bud by the winter of the barbarian conquest. Yet it lived on, and became one of the fountains of mediæval culture.

But it is not merely nor chiefly as artists that we should study these writers. Because they were artists they reflect naïvely the feelings of the Church of their time. And it was a time of the deepest historical interest. It was the time of the establishment of Christianity, of the four great Councils, and of the ruin of the Western Empire. During the lives of these three men Christian doctrine assumed its permanent shape, Paganism was destroyed, and every vestige of independent thought was crushed out by the terrible laws of Theodosius and his sons. Rome was sacked by Alaric, by Genseric, by Ricimer; the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Franks settled in Gaul, the Ostrogoths in Italy, Spain, Britain, and Africa were lost to the Empire, and the history of modern Europe began. We desire greatly to know what were the temper, the habits, the practical and intellectual frame of the Church while this stupendous change was enacting itself. On all these questions we shall gather light

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from the poet and the letter-writer, light all the more valuable because it is not their direct purpose to supply it.

What little we know of the life of Aurelius Prudentius Clemens[1] is derived almost entirely from his own writings. He tells us that he was born in the year 348, in the consulship of Salia, under Constans and Constantius, the sons of Constantine. He was a Spaniard, belonging to the province of Hispania Tarraconensis, which stretches along the Ebro to the south of the Pyrenees, and his home was probably in the close neighbourhood of Saragossa, for he was in intimate personal relations with Valerianus, the "pope," or bishop, of that city. We may gather that his family was of no great wealth or social consequence, for he nowhere mentions his parents, or any relative, or indeed any friend, except his bishop. Nor is he himself mentioned by any of his contemporaries. The natural inference would seem to be that he had never secured a place in the fashionable society of the day.

He tells us that he had passed through the usual course of education. He had "wept under the swishing rod" in the grammar school, and learned to declaim in one of the higher rhetorical academies. Like St. Augustine he reaped from this training

[1] An interesting chapter on Prudentius will be found in Mr. Glover's *Life and Letters of the Fourth Century;* another in Boissier, *Fin du Paganisme.*

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a thorough knowledge of the Latin classics, some slender tincture of Greek, and sufficient command of oratory to argue a law case, or to deliver one of those flowery panegyrics which were in perpetual demand.

From the high school he passed to the bar, a profession which in after years he regarded, again like St. Augustine, with strong dislike. He could see in advocacy nothing but chicanery, the art of making the worse appear the better. In that corrupt age, when laws were good and administration detestable, it must have been extremely difficult for a barrister to escape the debasing influences by which he was surrounded; and, as there was no career open to spirit and ability outside the forum and the camp, we may discern here one strong reason why so many good men were flying from the service of the State into the newly founded monasteries.

From the bar Prudentius was elevated to the bench. "Twice," he says, "with the reins of law have I guided illustrious cities." His good conduct brought him further official promotion. "At last the goodness of the Prince raised me to a higher grade in the service, and bade me stand in the order next to himself." The precise meaning of these vague phrases is not easy to fix. We may suppose that Prudentius had twice served as *præses*, that is to say, as a civil provincial governor of the lowest

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grade, and that, for merit in this capacity, he had been rewarded with the honorary rank of *consularis*. We shall be right in regarding him as a highly efficient civil servant, who had raised himself by good work to a considerable but still subordinate position.

And now, when Prudentius had reached the age[1] when it is natural to think of retirement, when "the snow," as he says, "was upon his head," came the great change. He tells us that his youth had been wild, but he had been for many years a grave and sedate magistrate, when God spoke to his heart and called him away from worldly cares. It is possible that he had before this written verses on secular themes; if so they have not survived. Henceforth he determined to live in peace and consecrate his poetic gift to the service of the Giver. "Let thy sinful mind," he cries to himself, "put off its folly. Let it praise God by voice, if it cannot praise Him by active service." Whether ill-health and worldly losses contributed to his resolution we cannot say. He appears to have suffered from both causes, but there is no trace of disappointment about him. Sweetness and humility are his abiding features. "Let me offer," he says, "my swift iambics and wheeling trochees, for small store have I of sanctity, and little

[1] He was in his fifty-seventh year when he began to write his sacred poems. The date will be A.D. 404. See the Preface to the *Cathemerinon*. But some of the poems may have been composed a little before this date; see Glover.

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wealth to help the poor." Even his poetic vein he rates with a modesty unusual in minor poets. "Lo, with my gift of an earthen bowl," he says, "I enter the palace of salvation, wherein is such store of gold and silver and ivory. It is good to offer God even the lowliest service. Come what may I shall not be ashamed of singing my Saviour."[1] He does not appear to have been ordained. Nor did he enter a monastic community. He seems to have been content to live in his own home a simple, ascetic life, and sound forth on his sweet, if slender, pipe, the glories of the martyrs and the beauty of the Church. We do not know when he died. We catch our last glimpse of him in the year 405, and it is probable that he did not live to witness the disasters that shortly afterwards descended upon the Eternal City.

One incident in his hidden life we are permitted to see. Not long after his retirement he made a journey to Rome to lay before Honorius some petition. We know not what it was, but it involved his "hope of the future," and the safety of his home. Probably on his resignation of office he found himself entangled in litigation with the exchequer; this, as we know from the experience of Gregory Nazianzen, was a frequent cause of ruin in those days of misgovernment. His prayer was granted, and he returned to Spain in peace.

[1] Preface to the Περὶ στεφάνων.

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It matters no more to us, than it does now to Prudentius, what was the burden of the prayer which he addressed to the ill-starred Honorius, as he knelt before the veil which hung in front of the Emperor's chair of audience. We are glad to know that the vultures were scared away from him. But the poet turned his journey into a kind of pilgrimage, visiting every famous church upon his road, and beseeching the martyrs for their aid in his distress. Several of these shrines he has described for us in charming verses and with childlike simplicity. Let us follow him as far as we can, see what he saw, and hear what was told him by the guardians of the sacred places.

He seems to have entered Italy by crossing the Alps, and travelled down the Æmilian Way. About halfway between Bologna and Rimini he came to Imola, where there stood, as there stands still, the church of St. Cassianus. Here was a picture representing the death of the martyr. He was said to have been a schoolmaster and teacher of shorthand, who in one of the persecutions, we are not informed which, had refused to sacrifice, and was thereupon given over to the tender mercy of his scholars, who stabbed him to death with their sharp styles. *Historia verissima*, the latest editor of Prudentius calls this tale, but we shall be safer in regarding it as a myth.[1]

[1] Yet Gregory Nazianzen tells us, *Oratio*, iv. 89, that, in the time of Julian, Mark of Arethusa, amongst his other torments, was pricked by school children with their sharp styles.

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The same manner of death was assigned by mediæval fancy to another and more famous teacher, Scotus Erigena, who is said to have been killed by his enraged pupils with their pens here in Oxford.

But it was in Rome that the pilgrim found the richest food for his imagination. The Eternal City was peopled with martyrs. Some of the tombs were those of well-known sufferers, and bore epitaphs; on some was inscribed nothing but a few words giving the number of the nameless victims interred within. In one of these graves as many as sixty martyrs were said to mingle their dust.[1]

It was the Rome of Damasus, who gained the Papacy by bloodshed, and adorned the city with intelligent munificence. He is best known in modern times by his labours on the Catacombs, which he opened out, cleansed, lighted, adorned with inscriptions in verse, composed by himself, and engraved by the skilful hand of his artist Filocalus. Some of you may have seen those most interesting monuments of the early Church, which have been recovered for us, to some extent, by the loving care of De Rossi. But Prudentius will show us how these underground sanctuaries appealed to the imagination of Christians

[1] Περὶ στεφάνων, xi. It has been supposed that the number of the tomb was sometimes mistaken for the number of martyrs who lay buried within it. Certainly the vast army of Roman or Italian martyrs can have existed only in the imagination of pilgrims. In the year 817 Pope Pascal I. is said to have removed to the church of S. Praxede no fewer than 2300 martyrs. See Lowrie, *Christian Art and Archæology*, p. 81.

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of the fourth century, when the memory of the great persecution was still recent, and the work of Pope Damasus was fresh and perfect.

In one of the subterranean chapels was a picture commemorating the martyrdom of Hippolytus, the famous scholar and teacher of the Church of Rome in the third century, whose face and figure we can see with our own eyes in the lifelike statue preserved in the Lateran Museum,[1] whose fate and history are the sport of legend and learned conjecture. According to the tale which Prudentius heard from his Roman guides, Hippolytus was a priest, who had been attached to the schism of Novatian, but abjured his errors on the way to death, and thus could be honoured as a true martyr. He was head of the Christian people at Ostia, and was there brought up for trial before the Emperor in person. Asked what his name was, he replied "Hippolytus." "Then let him be Hippolytus," was the sentence. Accordingly, like his namesake of the old Greek myth, he was bound to the heels of two wild horses, and torn to pieces as they galloped along.

[1] A good representation of the statue will be found in Lowrie, *Christian Art and Archæology*, p. 290, or in Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome*, p. 143. For the story of Hippolytus, see Döllinger, *Hippolytus and Callistus;* Lightfoot, *St. Clement of Rome*, vol. ii. p. 317 *sqq*. As told by Prudentius, it is no doubt suggested by the legend of his Greek namesake. But it was not invented by Prudentius; it was embodied in the picture which the poet actually saw, and was no doubt current in Rome at the time. Another legend which Prudentius tells, that of Quirinus of Siscia, seems to be borrowed from the old story of the death of Orpheus.

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The picture represented, not the martyrdom, but the scene which followed. Over the sands of the Ostian shore, among rocks and rough boscage, weeping Christians were seeking the relics of the martyr. Some gathered in their bosoms the fragments of his limbs; some with sponges and linen cloths were collecting the sacred blood from the thorns and from the ground; one bore in his arms the grey head. Beneath the picture, in the wall of the crypt, which was dimly lighted by means of shafts in the roof, was the *loculus* or *ædicula* containing the relics, and covered with plates of burnished silver; beneath this again was an altar for the memorial Eucharist. Hither on the Ides of August came pilgrims flocking from early dawn to sunset. All Rome was there, and crowds of strangers, men, women, and children, from Etruria, Picenum, Samnium, Campania; in a word, from all central Italy. There was little room in the strait subterranean chapel for the throng of worshippers, who, after a brief prayer at the tomb, climbed again the dark winding stair of the catacomb and poured into a neighbouring church, probably that of St. Laurence, recently built by Pope Damasus. It was a great basilica with double rows of columns and a gilded roof, but the whole of its "motherly bosom" was filled by a surging mass of worshippers, which the poet compares to the sea. Prudentius was deeply moved by this scene of enthusiasm. He

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was persuaded that by the intercession of the saint he had regained health of mind and of body, and that his safe return home was due to the same strong protector. And so he ends by begging Valerianus of Saragossa to introduce the festival into Spain, and give Hippolytus a place of honour by the side of Eulalia, a native saint, and Cyprian, the great African.

But the chief Roman festival was that of St. Peter and St. Paul, which was kept on the 29th of June, because the Apostles were thought to have died upon the same day, though after an interval of a year. The celebrations began with worship at daybreak in St. Peter's;[1] thence the people streamed back, across the bridge of Hadrian and along the left bank of the Tiber, to the church of St. Paul on the Ostian Way. Prudentius describes for us the great fountain of St. Peter's, the work of Pope Damasus, who collected here the streams gushing from springs on the Vatican hill. It is one of his prettiest passages; he delights as a modern artist would, in the flickering play of colour, as the gold and purple of the roof[2] are reflected on the clear water beneath, and on the green mosses that cling to the sides of the

[1] For old St. Peter's, see Lanciani, *Pagan and Christian Rome;* Lowrie, *Christian Art and Archæology;* Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis;* Gregorovius (Eng. trans.), vol. i. p. 32.

[2] The roof (*lacunar*) means the cupola which rose above the fountain. The *atrium* itself, in which the fountain stood, was not covered in. See the picture in Lanciani.

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white marble basin.[1] The church of St. Paul, the work of Constantine, Theodosius, and Honorius, was of "royal splendour." Four rows of magnificent columns supported the gorgeous roof, and the arches which sprang from them were covered with mosaics, "like meadows shining with vernal flowers."[2]

This account of the visit of Prudentius to Italy, taken from the book to which he gave the title *Of Martyr-Crowns*, will suggest two considerations. First as to the church buildings which were rising in great numbers all over the Empire at this time.

The shape of the church, borrowed in general from that of the Basilica or Palace of Justice,[3] was usually that of an oblong hall with an apse. The central space was divided into a nave with lateral aisles by rows of columns. Old St. Peter's had a transept at the extreme west end, immediately in front of the apse, like the top stroke of a capital T. In front of the church was a walled-in court, containing a *cantharus* or fountain-basin, and known as the *atrium* or *paradisus*. In these courts there stood also in many cases the standard weights of black

[1] Περὶ στεφάνων, xii. 31. Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* xiii. 13 (ed. Hartel) gives another similar description of this fountain.

[2] Περὶ στεφάνων, xii. 74.

[3] This is disputed. Lanciani and Lowrie consider the Christian basilica to have been copied, not from the heathen basilica, but from the ordinary dwelling-house.

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stone, which had been removed from the temples in 393. Tradition often represented them as stones which had been tied round the necks of martyrs who perished by drowning.[1]

The outside of the church was exceedingly plain, and the structures had often been hastily and badly built, but for this amends were made by the gorgeous decoration of the interior. Much of the ornamentation of the great Roman churches, columns and slabs of costly marble, had been plundered from dismantled temples. But the roofs panelled with gilt bronze, the pictures, and mosaics were new. It is these last which are to us so interesting. Mosaic in particular was employed with great freedom. In old St. Peter's, over the triumphal arch in front of the apse, was a great mosaic picture, in which the Emperor Constantine was depicted as presented by St. Peter to Christ, to whom he was offering a model of the basilica. In St. Paul's mosaics ran all round the building over the arches above the columns.

Gregorovius calls mosaic the "gilt flower of barbarism." I must not venture to pass judgment on a question of art, which is always a thorny, difficult subject. Nor need I dwell on the fact that all representations of the human figure were still regarded with great horror by Eastern conservatives,

[1] Lanciani, p. 38.

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such as Eusebius and Epiphanius.[1] But if we regard these decorations historically, we shall find in them a noticeable sign of the times. If we contrast the baldness of the exterior with the magnificence of the interior of these old churches, we may say that the secret of line had been lost, and that the secret of colour was gradually revealing itself. Pagan architecture was dead, its last great work is said to have been the arch of Constantine, and Christian architecture had not yet been discovered. Thus the Christian artist was compelled to rely chiefly on

[1] Eusebius (*H. E.* vii. 18) tells of a bronze group at Paneas (he had seen it himself) which was supposed to represent Christ Healing the Woman, *cf.* Matt. ix. 20. He knew also of pictures of Christ, Paul, Peter, and others, but thought them heathenish and objectionable. The group was probably an *ex voto*, set up by some wealthy heathen lady, who believed herself to have been cured by Æsculapius. The group is mentioned also by Macarius Magnes, i. 6, and by Philostorgius. See E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, and *Meletema*, xiii., in Heinichen's Eusebius. Eusebius expressed his opinion more definitely in his Letter to Constantia, the sister of Constantine (in Pitra, *Spic. Sol.* i. 383, or Migne, *Patr. Gr.* xx. 1546). He had taken away from some woman a picture supposed to represent Christ and Paul. Constantia wanted him to give it to her, but he refused, and explains to the high lady that such representations are unlawful. Epiphanius (see his letter, 51 in the Epistles of Jerome; ed. Vallarsi) found in a Palestinian church a curtain embroidered with the figure of Christ or some saint. He tore it down. The famous Edessan portrait of Christ, which was believed to have been drawn from life by Ananias, is later than the so-called Silvia, who spent some days at Edessa and saw all the sights there, but did not see this picture. Gregory of Nyssa mentions pictures of the Offering of Isaac (*Or. de Deit. Filii et Sp.*) and of the Martyrdom of Theodore (*Encom. Theodori*). Augustine mentions pictures of Apostles (*De Cons. Evang.* i. 10, 16). Paulinus of Nola tells us of portraits of himself and of Martin, and of frescoes depicting biblical scenes. Our Lord was represented symbolically in the Catacombs as Orpheus or the Good Shepherd (see also Tertullian, *De Pud.* vii. 10) or as a Lamb standing by a Cross (in the church of Paulinus). But the first direct representation of Christ in a church is apparently the mosaic in St. Paul's at Rome; the church was finished about 440.

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beauty of colour. But here he was entering upon a new field, for beauty of colour was but little valued or understood by Pagan art. Further, the splendour of the church lay, not like that of the Colosseum or the temples, on the outside, but on the inside. The motives, some of them hideous motives, which inspired the erection of these monumental edifices had vanished, but, what is still more noticeable, the interest in public affairs, to which the great public buildings testified, had also disappeared. The life of the State was dying, while the life of the soul was becoming more intense. We may see in these old churches a reflection of this fact. The spirit of man withdrew into itself, into its own inner beauty, into communion with the family of believers, till happier times should arise. They were educational also, these pictures, representing as they did, the features of good men, or scenes from Scripture, or the lives of the saints; and they were democratic, for while the severe beauty of form appeals to the few, the charm of colour is felt by almost everybody. But above all they lent themselves to the emotional, passionate character of the religion of the age, in which ardent feeling was rapidly sweeping away all the hesitation of common sense.

What are we to say of the martyr-stories of Cassian and Hippolytus, or of the many others, some of them far more extravagant, which Prudentius

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relates in his book *On Crowns?* He delights in revolting details. He transfers to Christian martyrs stories which were first told of Pagan heroes, of Orpheus and Hippolytus, and has not the least sense of historical credibility. He has not even caught the true martyr spirit, and represents Eulalia, a tender little Spanish maiden, as spitting in the face of her judge. This we must say in the first place, that we have here a new phenomenon. Compare these grotesque and impossible fairy-tales with the Viennese Letter, or the Acts of Perpetua or Cyprian or the Scillitan martyrs, and you will see at once that we have passed from a world of reality and true feeling to a world of romance and diseased feeling. It is in the fourth century, in Prudentius, and in the West, that we first detect this lamentable decline of intelligence.

New also are the extravagant honours paid to the martyrs, the unbounded belief in their miraculous powers, and the authority attributed to them. "The martyr," says Prudentius of Cassian, "hears all petitions and ratifies those which he sees to be good." He prays that by the intercession of Romanus he may be transferred at the Last Day from the goats to the lambs. Paulinus uses even a stronger phrase of St. Felix—*Te mala nostra abolente*,[1] "Thou dost wipe away our sins." In the East such

[1] *Carm.* xv. 24.

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language was as yet unknown. Gregory Nazianzen prays not to the martyrs but to God, not in the name of the martyrs but in that of his saintly father and mother. "Remember them, O God," he says, "and help me." The hymn of Ambrose on the martyrs ends simply with the words:—

> "Redeemer, grant us this, we pray,
> That in their blessed company
> We, Thy poor servants, safe may stay
> Through ages of eternity."

But, generally speaking, in the western half of the Empire the rising tide of the new devotion was too strong to be resisted. Vigilantius, a countryman of Prudentius, raised his voice in protest, but was overwhelmed by Jerome with spouts of acrid abuse.

From this point of view the martyrologies of Prudentius are rather depressing reading. But, if we consider them as literature, his narratives have several features of high interest. I will not dwell upon the variety of the metres, or upon the skill with which they are handled, because we should thus be led to regard Prudentius rather as the last of the ancients than as the first of the moderns. We may say of his martyr-tales that they are the earliest romances. They remind us more of Chaucer than of Ovid. It is precisely in this element of romance that we find the characteristic difference between classicalism and modern literature. And what is romance?

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The world well lost for an idea—is not that the essence of it? We may say of them again that they are the first efforts in realism. Very few of the classics drew straight from nature. Virgil's shepherds are shepherds of opera. Little things seemed vulgar and disgusting in the eyes of the Roman grandees for whom he wrote. But the Christian poet lived among simple people, and knew and loved every detail of their simple lives. Hence Prudentius is not afraid to tell us how the good Bishop Fructuosus, when he was being prepared for the fire, would not suffer the brethren to take his boots off, but stooped down and performed that menial office for himself. Again there is an artless pathos about his narrative, which, like these other qualities, flows directly from his Christianity. Thus he tells us how the body of the child-martyr Eulalia was cast out into the Forum, in front of the proud basilicas and temples, which symbolised the power of the World and the Devil, pleading its frail and dumb but unconquerable appeal from Cæsar to God, and how in the night snow fell and covered it "like a linen pall." Or take the *Salvete flores martyrum*, the salutation of the Holy Innocents in the Hymn on the Epiphany—

> "Ye, the first sacrifice of Christ,
> A victim flock of tender lambs,
> Before the very altar play,
> As babies use, with crowns and palms."

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Homer and Epicurus loved little children, but we can hardly say this of any other classic writer. Here we find, not only a new sentiment, but a new element in art. The Gospel has opened men's eyes to the beauty of Pity.

Enough has been said about the *Peristephanon;* let us glance for a few moments at the hymns. Here also Prudentius was breaking almost entirely new ground.[1] There were very few models. Of the early Greek hymns only four remain to us, the Morning Hymn, the first half of which is our *Gloria in Excelsis;* an Evening Hymn, which is very similar in type, and includes the *Nunc Dimittis;* a Hymn on the Lighting of the Lamps, beginning with the words, "O cheerful light of holy glory," and a prayer after meals, a sort of grace.[2] These venerable monuments of ante-Nicene devotion are all scriptural and rhythmical, but not metrical. The feeling which they express is adoration, and adoration of a severe and intellectual cast. Other hymns of which we read appear to have been dogmatic in character; they were often used as war-cries. For the rest there was nothing except the Psalms of David, which, rich

[1] Hilary and Ambrose come just before Prudentius.

[2] See Christ und Paranikas, *Anthologia Græca Carminum Christianorum.* We should perhaps add the two hymns, one in anapæsts, the other in trimeter iambics, attributed to Clement of Alexandria and printed with his works. See on them Redepenning, *Origenes,* i. p. 122. They have considerable literary merit, but can hardly be regarded as congregational songs. The reader who desires further information may consult Dr. Lock's article on "Verse-Writers" in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography.*

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and beautiful as they are, abound in difficulties, especially in the Greek and Latin translations. Something more was clearly needed to satisfy the exigencies of the new church-life. But Prudentius hardly ventures beyond the traditional round of subjects. All that he has added is a couple of hymns on Fasting, suggested by the rising ascetic movement, one on the Burial of the Dead, and two on the Christian seasons, on Christmas[1] and Epiphany. In form again he was hampered by his classic models. What was wanted was short songs, in short stanzas, adapted to easy recurring melodies, and a frank acceptance of the vulgar Latin, that is to say, of scansion by accent. Finally the lawless unsatisfying nature of accent made rhyme a necessity. If we take a stanza of the *Dies Iræ*, with its superb disregard of the pagan metre and its sonorous double assonances, we see at once the model towards which the Christian hymn was slowly beginning to turn. Rhyme makes its first timid venture in the *Lucis Creator Splendide* of Hilary, a contemporary of Prudentius. Indeed, it may be said that Hilary and Ambrose were on the right track, while Prudentius was not. He is too long and too classical.

In tone these old Latin hymns all follow steadily in the footprints of old times. All are marked by

[1] This was a new subject. The first distinct mention of Christmas Day (December 25) is found in the *Depositio Martyrum* of the fourth century: it may be found in Duchesne's *Liber Pontificalis*, vol. i. p. 11.

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solemn, sober feeling. There is no effusion and no introspection; adoration and awful reverence are still the note. Yet they produced a deep effect. Augustine has described in his *Confessions* the profound emotion aroused by the singing in Milan Cathedral; and, in his anguish after his mother's death, he found consolation in the severe hymn of Ambrose, *Deus Creator Omnium*. These solemn old hymns, like Dr. Watts' "O God, our help in ages past," or the metrical psalms, are strong, because they are, not the outpouring of individual emotion, but an attempt to realise the majesty of God.

The best of the hymns of Prudentius is that "for use at every hour." It is familiar to all churchgoers through the excellent, though much abbreviated translation, given as No. 56 in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, and beginning with the words, "Of the Father's Love begotten." Perhaps I may give you an almost literal rendering of the last two stanzas:—

"Thee let old men, Thee let young men,
Thee the lads in tuneful choir;
Thee the mothers and the maidens,
And the simple little girls,
Voices sweet in union blending,
Sound abroad in modest strains.

Thee the windings of the rivers,
Thee the waves and wild sea-strand,
Rain and heat and sun and hoarfrost,
Wind-tossed forests, night and day,
Celebrate in ceaseless praises,
Through the ages of all time."

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In the original there is no rhyme and no refrain. The second stanza, which has been judiciously omitted by the English translator, will illustrate the main defect of Prudentius as a hymn-writer. He is too much of a poet. The hymn is, of course, a species of poem, and it is not easy to see exactly what distinguishes it from other members of its beautiful family. May we say that it is a song addressed to God by a religious soul, and capable of use by all religious souls? It is, therefore, necessarily brief, not only because of its relation to congregational worship, but because of the depth and solemnity of the feeling which it expresses. It must be simple, sincere, strong, and universal, and though it may be highly artistic, its art must be as free from self-consciousness as that of a nightingale. Now Prudentius is too long and too graceful, and his hymns are religious lyrics, which may be read like the *Christian Year*, or the poems of Vaughan, but could not be sung.

The didactic doctrinal verses of Prudentius are of little interest. They are frigidly classical and scholastic. In the *Psychomachia*, or "Spiritual Combat," the Seven Virtues meet the Seven Vices in a series of Virgilian duels. Charity encounters Avarice in the lists; the two champions defy one another in set speeches, and finally the Virtue strangles the Vice, as Hercules strangled Cacus.

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The moment Prudentius gets into hexameters the habits of the school seize upon him and swamp him. The same thing is true of the two books against Symmachus. They are little more than a metrical paraphrase of the famous reply of St. Ambrose to the famous petition of Symmachus for the restoration of the Statue of Victory to its ancient place in the Senate-house of Rome, from which it had been removed by the Emperor Gratian some twenty years before. I may refer you to Gibbon for the narrative of that great debate, the one dramatic and worthy episode in the fall of Paganism. Yet there are two points in the diatribe of Prudentius which deserve notice. One is the generous admiration with which he speaks of the literary ability of his antagonist, and the wise tolerance which leads this upright old magistrate to approve of the appointment of meritorious pagans, like Symmachus, to places of importance in the employment of the State.[1] The downfall of Rome was undoubtedly hastened by the action of the zealot Honorius, who excluded all but the orthodox from the service of their country. The

[1] Here should have been noticed the fine lines in which Prudentius speaks of Julian the Apostate :—

> "Ductor fortissimus armis,
> Conditor et legum, celeberrimus ore manuque,
> Consultor patriæ, sed non consultor habendæ
> Religionis, amans tercentum millia divum ;
> Perfidus ille deo, quamvis non perfidus orbi." (*Apoth.* 450).

This is one of the noblest examples of generosity to be found in literature.

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other is furnished by the striking passage in which Prudentius expresses the affection of the Christians for Rome, and their proud confidence in its eternity. Symmachus, he says, thinks only of the conquered world and the pomp of a thousand triumphs. Shall I tell you the true meaning of that dazzling history? God willed peoples of discordant tongues, kingdoms of conflicting laws, to be brought together under one Empire, because concord alone knows God. Hence He taught all nations to bow their necks under the same laws, and to become Romans. Common rights made all men equal, and bound the vanquished with the bonds of fraternity. The city is the fatherland of all humanity—*Urbs Patria* is his fine phrase—our very blood is mingled, and one stock is woven out of many races. This is the fruit of the triumphs of Rome; they opened the door for Christ to enter in.[1]

Even here Prudentius is not strictly original. The heathen poet Claudian had already struck the same grand note:—

> "Hæc est in gremium victos quæ sola recepit,
> Humanumque genus communi nomine fovit,
> Matris non domini ritu, civesque vocavit
> Quos domuit, nexuque pio longinqua revinxit."[2]

Contrast this with the proud line of Virgil—

> "Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos."

[1] *Contra Symm.* 582.
[2] *De Consulatu Stilichonis*, iii. 150.

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These singers of a later day find the true glory of Rome in her motherhood, in that broad and liberal policy with which she had opened her house to all the nations, and adopted them as her own children. Prudentius and Claudian were both foreigners by descent, but they do not yield to the Anicii or Gracchi in loyalty to the Empire of which they were citizens. As they thought of what Orosius calls *Romania*, the world-wide unity and ancient civilisation which flowed from the Seven Hills, Christian and Pagan alike united in reverence for their great mother, and shut their eyes with what seems to us the blindness of infatuation to the misery of the times and the warnings of universal decrepitude.

To Prudentius it seemed impossible that Rome should be destroyed by savages. He writes in the brief flush of triumph that succeeded the dubious victory of Pollentia. Gaul was inundated already by the hordes of the North. The country round the Po was a mere desert, full of the ruins of what had been noble cities, and Alaric had made his fateful appearance in Italy. But Prudentius could not believe that the Eternal City would ever cease to be queen of the world. She had renewed her youth by casting off the fetters of idolatry, and her Christian children would surpass the exploits of the pagan Africanus. And so he calls upon the deplorable Honorius to "mount his triumphal car," and tells him that

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in the name of Christ he shall rule the whole world.[1]

This rosy optimism was not altogether the result of want of insight. In the old days of persecution the Fathers of the Church had often prophesied of the golden age which would dawn upon the world when the Gospel prevailed. The Gospel had, in a sense, prevailed, and the misery was greater than ever. Pagans did not fail to utilise the contradiction, and Christians were grievously perplexed to explain it. Hence we may understand the passionate asseverations of Prudentius that the deluge was but a passing shower. He was much in the position of a French bishop on the eve of the Revolution, and could hardly be expected to understand that orthodoxy will not uphold a society that is rotten at the core.

[1] Some notice ought here to be taken of the strong protest against the gladiatorial shows with which this piece concludes, *Cont. Symm.* 1090 *sqq.* It was written not long before the Eastern monk, Telemachus, sprang down into the arena, and lost his life while endeavouring to part the combatants.

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II

PAULINUS OF NOLA

PRUDENTIUS is interesting chiefly as one of the founders of Christian literature. Paulinus also was a poet, and in him again we see how the stiff, unfeeling conventionalities of classicalism were beginning to melt away before the breath of new and simpler emotions inspired by the Gospel. He is mainly a narrative poet, and what he has to tell are homely tales about homely folk, reminding the English reader of Wordsworth's *Ruth* or *Peter Bell*, or Crabbe's *Tales of the Hall*. You may smile sometimes at the artless jog-trot of the style, but the kindliness, the pure sentiment, and deep devotion, the love of poor ignorant people and their ways, above all the fresh and direct sense of the beauty of nature, are great features and command respect.

But, from an historical point of view, Paulinus has a deeper significance as one of the makers of the Western mediæval Church. He claims this title not by virtue of intelligence or erudition, for in truth

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he was but slenderly endowed with either,[1] but just because he was a poet of the people, an inspired child. To this day his festival is celebrated at Nola with quaint picturesque observances which would have delighted him, and his memory is venerated by the only people in Europe with whom he would still feel entirely at home.

Pontius Meropius Paulinus was a man of the highest birth and consequence. The Paulini ranked among the proudest of the Roman nobility, and his mother also belonged to a senatorial family. His father had been prætorian prefect, or, as we may say, viceroy, of Gaul, where he owned enormous estates, especially in Aquitaine. There Paulinus was born in 353 or 354, most probably at Ebromagus[2] on the Garonne, not very far from Bordeaux. At Bordeaux, the most famous school in the West, he was educated by Ausonius, the well-known poet, who was a friend of his father's, and afterwards became tutor to the Emperor Gratian. Whilst still a young man he was selected for high office in the service of the State;

[1] He knew Greek, but not well; he had translated a book of St. Clement's (probably the apocryphal *Recognitions*); but apologises for the looseness and inaccuracy of his version, *Ep.* xlvi. He had little acquaintance with history, *Ep.* xxviii. 5. He had read the *Chronicle* of Eusebius, but thought that Eusebius was Bishop of Constantinople, *Ep.* iii. 3. He did not profess to be a theologian, *Ep.* xliii. 3; but he could state doctrine clearly, *Ep.* xxxvii. 5. He knew the Latin Bible well, and could expound it devotionally and in the manner of a preacher: but he never discusses the text, or throws light upon difficulties.

[2] If not his birthplace it was his favourite place of residence. Ausonius expects him to come thence to Bordeaux down the Garonne by boat, *Ep.* xxiv. 126. The brother of Paulinus also had an estate there.

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he sat in the curule chair at Rome, and may then have been appointed governor, or *consularis*, of Campania.[1] But, as soon as he was released from the trammels of this onerous dignity, he returned to Gaul to attend upon his mother, his father being probably no longer alive. Hence he visited Spain, where he married Therasia, a Spanish lady of high family and great wealth; but he appears to have returned to Aquitaine and lived there until his final breach with the world. At this time his brother was slain in some political disturbance, in which he had embraced the losing side. Paulinus himself was entangled in his brother's catastrophe, and went in danger not only of his property but also of his life.[2]

At this juncture he sought for and received baptism at the hands of Delphinus, the saintly

[1] The precise offices filled by Paulinus are obscure. His name does not occur in the Fasti, and it is doubtful whether he was ever consul. Ausonius only says that Paulinus mounted the curule chair before himself (before 379), adding that the poetic crown of Paulinus was adorned with a *lemniscus*, which he himself had no right to wear; but I do not know the exact meaning of this statement. The only office which Paulinus claims to have held in the account of his own life, was one marked by six fasces (*Carm.* xxi. 374, 395), that is to say, was of prætorian not of consular dignity. During his tenure of this he boasts that he had shed no human blood. He can, therefore, hardly have exercised criminal jurisdiction. Whether he ever held any official position in Campania is extremely doubtful. Most probably he had been prætor at Rome, and never accepted any other appointment. But Tillemont thinks that he was certainly *consularis* of Campania. He was, of course, a senator, *Carm.* xxi. 458.

[2] See *Carm.* xxi. 416; *Ep.* xxxv. The date and circumstances cannot be precisely fixed. The brother's death may have happened at any point between the revolt of Maximus in 383 and the destruction of his son, Victor, by Arbogastes in 388.

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bishop of Bordeaux. Like many men of the time he had deferred this momentous act till middle age. It is probable that affliction gave the final impulse, but he seems always to have lived a pure and religious life. From childhood he had been strongly attracted by the fame of St. Felix,[1] and as a man he had cultivated the acquaintance of Martin, the apostle of the Loire, and of Victricius, the apostle of Normandy.[2] Possibly also his course was determined, as Ausonius insinuates, by the influence of Therasia, a woman of the ardent Spanish temperament. At any rate from this time he determined to break loose from all his old ties, and give himself up to a life of devotion. For this purpose he may have felt that Aquitaine was ill-suited. It was the richest, most luxurious, and, Salvian adds, the most dissolute of the provinces. At Bordeaux Paulinus had saintly and beloved friends in Delphinus and Amandus, but there also dwelt Ausonius, his tutor and second father, a Christian and a poet, a good man, yet one who did not think it inconsistent to write as if he still believed in Apollo and the

[1] *Carm.* xxi. 367.

[2] He met Victricius at the abode of Martin in Vienna (*Ep.* xviii. 9), before his own conversion: Contenebrantibus me, illo tempore non solum peccatis, quibus etiam nunc premor, sed et curis huius sæculi—that is to say, in the days of my spiritual blindness. Sulpicius Severus (*Vita Martini*, 19) says that Paulinus at the time was suffering from an affection of the eyes, that Martin touched his eyes with a brush and miraculously healed them. Paulinus would surely have mentioned this fact, if it had happened. Somehow Sulpicius seems to have turned spiritual blindness into physical.

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Muses. Paulinus was himself a poet, with all the sensitiveness and some of the vanity that attach to the character. He had acquired a certain fame and was besieged with high-flown compliments, such as passed current among the literary coterie of that time, when every orator was a Cicero and every little songster a Virgil. Probably he knew that the glory of letters was his besetting temptation, and judged it wise to remove from the neighbourhood of so dangerous a friend as Ausonius. Ausonius bewailed the separation in verses marked by great pathos and not a little truth.[1]

Accordingly Paulinus withdrew to Spain, the country of his wife, where also he appears to have possessed an estate. The life he proposed to himself at this time was that of a pious country gentleman. "Give me," he says, in the prayer which appears to belong to this date, "give me a happy home and unbought banquets, a contented slave, a faithful friend, a decent servant, an obedient wife, and

[1] Ausonius sent to Paulinus his absurd *Technopægnion*. Paulinus sent in return a poem in which he versified the three books of Suetonius, *De Regibus*, Aus. *Ep.* xix. In *Ep.* xxiii. Ausonius complains that he has not heard for a long time from Paulinus (this must have been written after the conversion of the latter), and begs him, if he is afraid of "Tanaquil" (Therasia), to reply in cipher. *Ep.* xxiv. is a very moving appeal to Paulinus not to break off their old friendship. In *Ep.* xxv. he begs Paulinus not to bury his honours in Spain. Paulinus answers in *Carm.* x. and xi., gently blames Ausonius for his poetic recognition of the heathen gods, for his satiric strokes at Spain, Therasia, and himself, compares him to Tullius and Maro, protests his own unaltered affection for him, and cuts the tie.

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children from my dear wife."[1] He was going "to bury his honours in Spain," as Ausonius said, and live among his own people as an unambitious Christian gentleman. But here also affliction pursued him. A son was born to him, but the blessing was no sooner given than it was taken away again.[2] Paulinus buried the child of his hopes and tears among the martyrs at Complutum, and resolved to forsake the world. Not long afterwards he was ordained priest at Barcelona.[3] He tells us himself that he was forced into the priesthood "by the violence of the multitude." In those times of universal misery and disorganisation it not uncommonly happened that the people laid hold of any religious and powerful layman, in whom they saw an efficient champion against the oppression of tax-collectors or the cruelty of barbarian invaders, and compelled him to accept ordination by pressure little, or not at all, short of physical force. Sometimes even lower motives may have operated. Pinianus was urged with threats of personal violence to accept the priesthood at Hippo, and his mother, the ascetic Albina, asserted that the object of the people was to gain possession of his great possessions for the church of that town.[4]

[1] *Carm.* iv. In *Carm.* v. he prays that he may be "semper genitor sine vulnere nominis huius"; this he must have written after the death of his infant.

[2] *Carm.* xxxi. 601 *sqq.* The child lived but eight days.

[3] *Ep.* i. 10. He was ordained by Lampius, *Ep.* iii. 4.

[4] Aug. *Ep.* 125–128.

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Paulinus submitted to the desire of his countrymen as to the will of God, making only one stipulation, that he should have what we may call a roving title, and not be bound to the service of any particular church. Probably he had already decided upon his future. He divested himself of all his vast possessions,[1] quitted Spain, and took up his abode at Nola in Campania, about twenty miles to the east of Naples. Nola is known to history as the only town in Campania that withstood the attacks of Hannibal, and as the place where Augustus died, but its crowning attraction was that it contained the tomb of the confessor Felix. Paulinus had always felt himself strongly drawn towards this particular saint.[2] He owned estates in the vicinity, and, when governor of Campania, had made a road to the church of Felix, and built a hospice for the poor and sick. This he now enlarged by the addition of an upper storey for his own accommodation. Hither he retreated with his wife Therasia in 392 or 394, and here he spent the remainder of his days.

Thus Paulinus by one stroke cut himself abso-

[1] His estates in Gaul were so large that Ausonius calls them *regna;* when sold they passed into the hands of a hundred new owners, Aus. *Ep.* xxiv. 115. He had estates in Spain, in the country of the Vascones (Paul. *Carm.* x.), and apparently in Campania. It seems clear from his later story, and his large expenditure on building, that he must have retained control of a considerable income. The same difficulty meets us in the case of Basil. It may be that, when property was given to the Church, the donor was allowed to retain the usufruct of, at any rate, some portion. There are indeed known instances of this.

[2] *Carm.* xxi. 365 *sqq.*

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lutely adrift from the world. Such a sacrifice, made by so conspicuous a personage, caused the greatest sensation throughout the Empire. Ausonius regarded it as an act of treason against society, and there were many others who took this view. On the other hand, the great patrons of the new asceticism, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, can hardly find language warm enough to express their admiration of an example so brilliant. It is difficult to strike the balance. Paulinus gave up not merely pleasure and fame, but responsibility. At a moment when the world was in crying need of wise governors, good landlords, upright magistrates, brave officers, when the Empire was reeling to its fall for want of just and fearless men to stand in the gap, this great nobleman falls out of the march and lays down his arms. After his retirement we find him writing to officers in high command, exerting all his eloquence to persuade them to follow his example. "If we serve Cæsar rather than Christ," he tells one, "we shall go to hell. We ought not to prefer affection, country, office, wealth, to God."[1] Every officer in the army or the civil service, who showed any inclination towards piety, was being bombarded with letters of this kind, while Alaric was devastating Italy with fire and sword. Augustine told Count Boniface, who was also meditating retirement, that

[1] *Ep.* xxv. See also *Ep.* viii.

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he could serve God by fighting against the barbarians, but those who spoke this language were few. We cannot excuse Paulinus. If he was not able to fight his country's battles, at least he might have prayed for those who were bearing the brunt. It is a singular reflection that, though he valued the Old Testament very highly, and interpreted it very literally, for points of ceremonial observance, he attaches no importance whatever to patriotism, or freedom, or the example of the Hebrew warrior saints.

On the other hand, it may be said with justice that Paulinus was not a man of action. He was neither scholar nor theologian. He had not the energetic commanding personality of Ambrose or Basil. He was just a Christian poet of the same stamp as Prudentius, a crystal soul with a slender but genuine gift of song. Childlike simplicity, tender affection, high-bred courtesy not without a sly vein of humour, sincere devotion, absolute self-denial—these are his endowments, these are the lessons that he has to teach us in his graceful, elaborate letters and poems. The sweet shade-loving violet is his counterpart, and Henry Vaughan, the Silurist, who retired into Wales, and from that peaceful retreat looked out on the horrid confusion of the Civil Wars, is his spiritual brother. We must not expect men to be what God has not made them. As a com-

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mander against the Goths Paulinus would probably have brought discredit upon his ancestry. As the pastoral Bishop of Nola he was in his right place, and it is to his credit that he aspired to no more arduous vocation.

At Nola he spent all the rest of his life. About 408 he lost his beloved wife, Therasia, whose name is coupled with his own in the address of many of his letters—*Paulinus et Therasia peccatores.* Early in 410 he was made bishop, and in the same year Nola was sacked by the army of Alaric. Paulinus was taken prisoner, and was not unreasonably afraid of barbarous usage. "Lord," he prayed, "let me not be put to torture for the sake of silver or gold, for whither all my wealth has gone Thou knowest." But he was released unharmed, and exerted himself to provide the means of ransoming other captives. Except for this disaster the current of his life flowed smoothly and uneventfully to the time of his death in 431. In his Letters and Poems he has left us a minute and interesting picture of his life at Nola.

He dwelt with a little band of friends, in a sort of private monastery, in the upper storey of the hospice before mentioned. At one time the family was composed of ten, all members of the high Roman aristocracy. Five were women, five were men. They were Paulinus himself, and his wife Therasia, Albina, the

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widow of Melanium's[1] son; Turcius, and his wife Avita, who was Melanium's sister; their children, Asterius and Eunomia; their other daughter, the younger Melanium, with her husband Pinianus; and Æmilius. Except the last named they were all related to the elder Melanium, and to one another. It was a community not unlike that of Little Gidding, bound together, not apparently by any definite vow, but by mutual affection and common devotion. Such domestic convents appear to have been not unusual at this time, though regular monasteries were already being established, especially in Gaul under St. Martin, St. Honoratus, and others.

Once in every year Paulinus went to Rome to attend the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul. Here he spent about a fortnight, in such a whirl of services and visits that he had no time to read even the last new treatise of St. Augustine. Except for this annual excursion he seems hardly to have quitted the precincts of St. Felix. His chief connection with the outside world was by correspondence. Every now and then a letter-carrier used to arrive from Jerome at Bethlehem, or from Augustine in Africa, or from Delphinus and Amandus at Bordeaux, or, most welcome of all, from his dear friend Sulpicius at Primuliacum. Many of his correspondents have been

[1] *Carm.* xxi. I have written Melanium, but Hartel thinks that Melanius is the correct form. MSS. of Jerome vary between Melanium, Melanius, and Melania. See Butler, *Lausiac History*, note 85.

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dignified with the title of saint. Beside those already named, we read in his pages of Pammachius, Martin, Victricius, Ambrose, Venerandus, Niceta, Eucherius, Honoratus. All these are men of mark in the history of the Church. Niceta spread the Gospel among the wild tribes in the country about the Danube,[1] and the Gallic bishops were honourably distinguished for zeal and success in mission work.

The letter-carrier deserves a few words to himself. Sometimes he was a slave, sometimes a cleric of inferior degree. Sometimes his round would take a whole year or even two; he would stop at this place or that, to attend a pilgrimage or get his fever cured, or possibly there was no ship, or the roads were not safe. He carried a considerable load with him, not only letters but books, pictures, presents of clothing, the little loaves called "blessings," which ecclesiastics were in the habit of sending to one another, or, most precious of all, relics, a bit of the Cross enclosed in a tube of gold, or a tiny portion of the body of some saint. The commerce in relics was at this time as active as it became again later on at the time of the Crusades. The most interesting of these personages was Victor, the messenger of Sulpicius Severus. He

[1] His see was Remesiana, in Dacia. Special interest attaches to his name, as he was probably the author of the *Te Deum*. This attribution, which is due to the learned Dom Morin, has obtained wide acceptance. See *Niceta of Remesiana: His Life and Works*, by A. E. Burn, D.D.

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was a monk of the best pattern, a disciple of Martin and Clarus, and appears to have been specially charged by Sulpicius to teach the little community at Nola how real monks ought to live. So great was his humility that he insisted upon performing menial offices about the person of Paulinus, shaved him, washed his feet, gave him massage, and wanted even to clean his boots, a menial duty which Paulinus could not bring himself to allow. The Nolan family considered themselves thorough ascetics, and fasted every day until the ninth hour, but they were great people and nice about their food. Victor set himself to root out this "senatorial daintiness." He took charge of the kitchen, made the porridge, not of wheaten meal, but of barley or millet, and even concocted unsavoury messes of mixed grain, of beans and panic, for which he found the recipe in Ezekiel.[1] The most delightful of the letters is that in which Paulinus informs Sulpicius how faithfully Victor has dealt with the infirmities of Nola; it is full of quaint sweet piety, and fine consideration, with just a lurking twinkle of amusement. Victor would be dressed in a hair shirt and a longish cloak, girt round the waist with a rope, and these garments would not be clean. He would have a kind of tonsure; either his crown would be completely shaved, or one side of

[1] *Ep.* xxiii. 4 *sqq.* It was from Ezek. iv. 9 that Victor learned how to make porridge.

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his head would be shaved, or the hair would be cut well back from the forehead.[1] Another curious figure is that of Cardamas, the Bordeaux messenger. He had been an actor of pantomime and a drunkard, but was now an exorcist, and much improved in sobriety, though still inclined to rebel against the meagre fare of Nola. Paulinus speaks of him in a tone of kindly banter, and ends by requesting Amandus to give him a slave to replace an old woman, who had been accustomed to wait upon him, but was now past work.[2]

Among the correspondents of Paulinus the best beloved was Sulpicius Severus. The two were old friends. Sulpicius also was an Aquitanian noble, and his life was the counterpart of that of Paulinus. He retired from the world about the same time, keeping nothing for himself but one house, which he used as a kind of monastery, very like that at Nola. The two interchange little presents, a camel's-hair gown, a shirt of lamb's wool. Or Sulpicius, who was a man of considerable learning, wants information for his history; Paulinus protests his ignorance of the sub-

[1] *Ep.* xxii. 2. There seems to have been no fixed rule for this monastic tonsure: the object was simply disfigurement. Of clerical tonsure there is no mention before this date; the custom was simply to cut the hair short at ordination, see Prudentius, Περιστ. xiii. 30 (of St. Cyprian); see Bingham, ii. 206. The British Church, as readers of Bede will remember, used a frontal tonsure. We may suppose that this practice was adopted from the monks of St. Martin, and that the coronal tonsure was unknown at the time when the Saxon invasion separated the British from the Church on the continent.

[2] For Cardamas, see *Ep.* xv., xix., xxi.

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ject, but gets the needful assistance from Rufinus. But the great bond between the two was their common love of church building. Sulpicius had erected two churches at Primuliacum, with a baptistery between them. For the dedication Paulinus sends him a little chip of the Cross brought by Melanium from Jerusalem, and tells him the story of the Invention.[1] But Sulpicius wanted also a further favour, he was anxious to adorn his baptistery with the portraits of two saints: Martin, who had died not long before, and Paulinus himself. Paulinus modestly protests against this extraordinary mark of honour, but sends the portrait, and with it an inscription in verse. The only difference between the two friends arose out of their devotion to the saints. Sulpicius, who had written the life of Martin, and made constant pilgrimages to his shrine at Tours, could never be induced to visit Nola, and Paulinus earnestly remonstrates with him on this neglect, by which it appeared to him his friend's salvation was imperilled. "As you hope for the grace of Christ by

[1] *Ep.* xxxi. The rapid growth of the legend of the Invention of the Cross is one of the most remarkable instances of the credulity of the fourth century. The Pilgrim of Bordeaux, who visited the holy places in 333, does not mention the Cross at all, nor does Eusebius. Cyril of Jerusalem (about 346) affirms that the true Cross existed at Jerusalem, and that it was discovered in the time of Constantine, but does not say by whom. The so-called Sylvia saw the Cross about 385, but does not mention Helena. A few years later the Helena legend appears in the West, in Sulpicius Severus, Ambrose, Rufinus, Paulinus. In the *Doctrine of Addai* (church of Edessa) the Cross is said to have been discovered by Protonike, wife of the Emperor Claudius. Cyril of Alexandria says that the Cross had often been discovered, *Comm. in xii. Proph.*; ed. Pusey, vol. ii. 540.

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honouring Martin, so fear the offence of Christ if you offend Felix." "My lord Felix is full of compassion, but I beseech you, love and fear him the more, because he is so good and indulgent." Thus early began that rivalry between the devotees of different saints which Thomas a Kempis deplores.

Another friend was Rufinus, who incurred so much obloquy by his attempt to introduce the study of Origen into the Western Church. Origenism was at this time a very burning question, both in the East and in the West. Paulinus can hardly have been without sympathy for Rufinus, for he had probably himself translated the *Recognitions* of Clement, a work of very dubious orthodoxy, though, as he confesses, his knowledge of Greek was hardly equal to the task. But he pronounces no opinion on the conduct of Jerome or on the points at issue. He himself felt no doubts and asked no questions, and was content to live in peace with all sincere Christians. He had the profoundest admiration for St. Augustine, but he did not understand the doctor of grace, and more than once gives frank expression to a belief which is absolutely incompatible with his teaching, the belief that all baptized people, whatever may have been their lives, are assured of salvation.[1]

[1] Tillemont blames Paulinus for this. See *Carm.* vii. 38; xxiv. 138. The belief was not uncommon about this time. Turmel, *L'Eschatologie à la fin du IV^e siècle*, gives many instances.

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Here we may see almost the only trace of Origenism which survived.

Every thought and act of Paulinus after his retirement to Nola centred upon the group of churches surrounding the tomb of St. Felix, which he served first as priest and afterwards as bishop.[1] They were five in number. One he built himself, one he re-edified and adorned, and the labour of his life was to lay out the court and cloisters, to decorate the quadrangles with fountains spouting with a plentiful supply of water, procured with great difficulty and at great cost from the mountains of Abella, and to enrich the altars with relics of the saints and apostles.[2] Hither on 14th January, the day of St. Felix, and indeed throughout the year, came crowds of pilgrims, men, women, and children, bringing with them sick people, and even sick cattle, to be healed, and demoniacs who were exorcised by the curious method of hanging them up by the heels before the altar; in very obstinate cases it was noticed that the clothes of the afflicted person remained rigid, and did not fall down about his head.[3] Similar festivals had been established in the East by Gregory Thaumaturgus, but with many misgivings, and as a temporary

[1] For the churches see *Carm.* xviii., xix., xxvii., xxviii.

[2] Paulinus believed himself to possess relics (actual portions of the bodies) of St. Andrew, John the Baptist, St. Thomas, and St. Luke, of the martyrs Agricola Vitalis, Proculus, and Euphemia. Ambrose had sent a relic of Nazarius, *Carm.* xxvii. 406 *sqq.*

[3] *Carm.* xviii., xxiii. 45 *sqq.*, 82 *sqq.*

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concession to the pleasure-loving ways of the newly converted heathen. Many of the pilgrims at Nola were still half Pagan, and spent the night in drinking and noise. To mitigate this evil Paulinus caused the porticoes, in which they lodged, to be painted with frescoes representing scenes from the history of the Old Testament. Some time, he thought, the people would spend in learning the meaning of these pictures, and while they were so employed at any rate the wine-jar would be neglected. The festival was the great joy of his heart, and as often as it recurs Paulinus bursts into poetry like a nightingale whose plumage is so sombre and whose song is so bright.[1]

If the day is snowy he sings the beauty of winter:[2] the hills with their white caps remind him of those grey hairs which are a crown of glory to the good old man: if the early Campanian spring has brought open skies, balmy winds, and the promise of flowers, he must carol with the birds—*ver avibus voces aperit, mea lingua suum ver Natalem Felicis habet.* Always his theme is the goodness and bounty of Felix his friend, and father, and patron, and lord. Of God he speaks with awful reverence; on Felix he pours out all the treasures of his heart, his pride, his joy, his fondness.

Felix[3] was a Syrian who became priest at Nola,

[1] *Carm.* xxiii. 32.
[2] *Carm.* xviiii. 16.
[3] For the story of Felix, see especially *Carm.* xv. xvi.

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where his father, a veteran officer, had settled after his retirement from the service. Paulinus tells us very little that is definite about him, and that little hardly explains the reverence in which his memory was held. Maximus, the Bishop of Nola, had betrayed his trust in the persecution of Diocletian. He did not deny the faith, but fled into the mountains in fear of his life. Felix, who had remained steadfast at his post and suffered imprisonment and torture, heard that the fugitive was perishing of cold and hunger, went forth by night to seek him, found the dying man, brought him back to life by pressing the juice of wild grapes into his lips, carried him home on his own shoulders, found a safe shelter for him, and never uttered a word of reproach. Not long afterwards he himself was pursued by the soldiery and took refuge in an abandoned hut. A spider came and spun its threads across the doorway. The pursuers, following hard upon his heels, saw the cobweb and did not think it worth while to search within. "Where Christ is, a cobweb is a wall," says Paulinus; "where He is not, a wall is a cobweb." After the death of Maximus the people would have made Felix bishop, but he persuaded them to take Quintus, who was senior to himself by seven days, and contentedly sat down in the lower room. He maintained himself on the produce of a little plot of three acres of land, which he did not own, but rented and cultivated with his

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own hands, yet he was always rich enough to give to those poorer than himself. A cluster of churches sprang up round his grave.

This is all that we know of Felix, and even this little has been embroidered by pious imaginations till we hardly feel sure how much is reality and how much romance. Some of these Western saints—Martin of Tours, Patrick, Columba of Iona, are instances, and Paulinus himself is another—exercised a kind of witchery over men's minds, and attracted to themselves all the poetic element of the Italian or Gallic or Celtic nature. They differ widely from the Eastern saints.

In the East we find Simeon Stylites, who lived for thirty years on the top of a pillar, or that Egyptian abbot who gave his walking-stick to his novice, directing him to water it till it blossomed, with water fetched across the burning sand from the Nile, or the monks who followed Theophilus like a pack of hounds to tear down John Chrysostom. The Westerns were less logical, but far more human. The stories that are told of them are sometimes whimsical, but always tender. They had their frailties, of a very lovable kind, and they were lenient to the frailties of others. It was just this characteristic that made them great missionaries. The simple, impulsive, poetical folk of Campania found in this little priest Felix their proper ideal, much as the Sikh troopers found theirs in John

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Nicholson, and proceeded to crown him with a halo of romance.

They were credulous saints no doubt, and they dwelt among a credulous people, a people only half-reclaimed from savagery, capable equally of the finest self-sacrifice and of the wildest unreason. Let us glance here at one of the stories told by Paulinus: it will give us the best insight into his own character and that of his Campanian flock.

A certain poor man[1] had two oxen which he used to let out on hire. They were his sole property, and he cared for them as for himself or his children; nay, before he fed himself or his children he fed his oxen. But while he slept the heavy sleep of the poor, robbers came and stole them away. In sore distress he hastens to the church, prostrates himself weeping on the threshold, kisses the doorposts, and proceeds, not to cast himself on the mercy of Heaven, but to expostulate with the saint for his cruel neglect of one who had trusted him. "See," he says, "what trouble I am in and all through your fault. Why did you suffer me to sleep so soundly?" The poor man feels that he has a strong case against his careless patron, and drives it home with a curious show of reasonableness and moderation. "I do not want other oxen," he goes on, "give me back my own; there are none like them. And do not think that I will go to look

[1] *Carm.* xviii. 219 *sqq.*

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for them. This is the place where I expect to find them." He even threatens Felix. "Thou, O Saint, art the guilty one, thou art the accomplice of the thieves, and knowest where my oxen are; I will not let thee go." Yet his sense of wrong does not make him unjust. He knows the ways of Felix. "Thou wouldest always rather mend a rascal by forgiveness than ruin him by punishment. Let us strike a bargain then. Let the thieves go, but give me back my oxen." The saint listens with a smile to this rough pleading. The man is but a child, and speaks like a child, but his heart is right, and he is in trouble, and must be relieved. When the time comes for closing the church the vergers drive the man away. He goes home and casts himself down on the floor of the empty byre. At midnight there is a noise of beating upon the door; he opens it with a trembling hand, and the oxen rush in and slobber their recovered master with kisses from their wet muzzles. In the morning he drives them to the church, thanks the saint for his goodness, but tells him that even yet he has not finished his work. "Lo, I have wept myself blind; now give me back my sight." An unseen hand touches his eyes and heals them.

We may notice, what has already been remarked in the case of Prudentius, the new simplicity and directness of the narrative. The tale is told in the

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manner of Crabbe or Wordsworth. The narrator relies upon the intrinsic pathos of the facts, and does not flinch from detail. No classic poet would have condescended to notice the smells of a byre, or the dripping muzzle of an ox. The Christian poet loves little people, and nature as God made it. Paulinus, as has been observed, could see the beauty of a snowy day, and describes the nightingale much more accurately than any previous writer. But from another point of view what singular reflections arise! It is just such a tale as might be heard in Southern Italy to-day. The Nolan farmer treats Felix as the Neapolitan fishermen treat Januarius, or like the Breton blacksmith, who threatened to shoe the Virgin with redhot iron if his little daughter was not healed. These kindly saints, who take their people as they find them and do not ask too much, have stepped into the vacant place of the good little household gods, the Lares and Penates, who loved the poor, and allowed themselves to be beaten when things went wrong. We see also something of the methods of the first missionaries. They did not pitch their expectations too high. People brought cattle and sacrificed them before the church of Felix, just as they had done before the temple of Venus. There would be a difference in the ritual, and the flesh was distributed among the poor pilgrims, but a Campanian peasant would see little change. Paulinus was bringing the Church to

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the people, which, we are sometimes told, is the right course to follow.

The whole air at this time was full of marvels. The sudden deliverance wrought by Constantine had turned men's heads, and taught them to believe that nothing was beyond the limits of credibility. If the church cross was stolen and recovered, if fire broke out and destroyed only half a building, if a man running along in the dark hurt his eye against a lamp-chain but did not lose his sight, the hand of Felix had been at work. But there were much more extraordinary things than these. Let us turn to another tale that Paulinus relates,[1] and see how some, at any rate, of these stories arose.

A ship had been driven on the Bruttian coast, dismantled by a storm, with only one living man on board; and her freight of corn had been seized by the agent of Postumianus, a great Roman dignitary, who owned that part of the shore. The corn was State property, and Postumianus might have been forced to disgorge his booty by process of law. But the owner of the ship was far too prudent to attempt that remedy against a senator. On the other hand, he was liable for the cargo under heavy penalties, unless he could prove that the loss was not caused in any degree by his own fault, and the surviving member of the crew would be called upon to give

[1] *Ep.* xlix.

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evidence, and would be tortured as a preliminary.[1] In this hard dilemma the ship owner judged it best to secure a powerful patron, and accordingly sent to Paulinus the sailor who had escaped from the wreck, one Valgius, with a story that was sure to enlist the sympathy of the saint.

Valgius then went to Nola and told his tale. The rest of the crew had taken to the boat at the onset of the storm, but the boat was swamped and they were all drowned. He alone was left on board, and, seeing no help in his extremity, fell to his prayers. Immediately there appeared on the deck a company of angels under the direction of St. Felix, the special patron of Paulinus. For twenty-three days, during which the storm lasted, these heavenly ministers worked the ship, cut down the mainmast, pumped out the water, hoisted the sails, and set the course. Our Lord Himself was there in visible shape, pinched Valgius by the ear when he slept too heavily, promised him deliverance, and directed him to be baptized under the new name of Victor. Paulinus was entirely carried away by this romance of the sea. He listened with delight to the tale of the artless mariner, stroked the ear which had been hallowed by the divine touch, and would have liked to cut it off and preserve it as a relic, if he

[1] The severe laws regarding the wreck of ships which carried public corn will be found in the *Codex Theodosianus*, xiii. 9.

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had not been restrained by principles of humanity. Finally he wrote to Macarius, one of his great friends at Rome, begging him to exert all his influence to secure the restitution of the corn, which by angelic aid had been saved from the fury of the waves only to fall into the hands of wicked men.

We can hardly doubt that this story of Valgius was a deliberate fraud. It would not be possible to apply the same explanation in all cases, but enough has been said to show the easy hopeful credulity out of which these marvels sprang. There are several remarks which ought to be borne in mind. This frame of mind, this naturalising of the supernatural, is a new phenomenon; it belongs to the age of Constantine and his successors. Further, it seems to work upwards from below. It springs from the bosoms of the poor and ignorant, from the tales that pilgrims told one another during the long cold nights in the cloisters of Nola, tales that they had heard from other pilgrims elsewhere in similar places. Men like Ambrose, or Augustine,[1] or even Paulinus, did not invent these stories; but they were swept along by the rising tide of sensationalism, and hardly endeavoured to resist. And here we discern a

[1] Augustine was as credulous as any one. In 415 the supposed discovery of the remains of St. Stephen, Gamaliel, Nicodemus, and Abibas, the son of Gamaliel, at Caphar Gamala, a village about twenty miles from Jerusalem, caused an extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm. Some portion of the corpse of St. Stephen was carried into Africa, and numerous miracles followed. Several persons were believed to have been raised from death; *De Civ. Dei*, xxii. 8.

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remarkable feature in the history of Christianity. The difference between the Eastern and Western Churches, between Nicæa and the Middle Ages, was shaped mainly by men like Paulinus, who did but reflect the emotions of the masses around them. These popular saints gave authority to popular modes of thought, which but for them would never have risen above the level of their origin. Later theology is largely occupied with providing a basis in Scripture and philosophy for opinions which have no real connection with either one or the other, which have indeed no other source than the irresponsible and unrestrained devotion of the people.

As Paulinus lay dying in 431—he would be about seventy-eight years of age—he called for Martin of Tours and Januarius of Naples, both of whom, he said, had promised to be with him in that hour. It is singular that he did not mention Felix. Januarius is another of these obscure saints; he is hardly known to us except as the patron of the Neapolitan fishermen; of Martin, Sulpicius Severus wrote a Life which, unsatisfactory as it is in many important respects, yet succeeds in giving a clear impression of a most remarkable man. It was Martin who protested against the execution of the Spanish heretic Priscillian, and refused to hold fellowship with the bishops at whose instance that cruel deed

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had been perpetrated. Afterwards, to save the life of some of Gratian's officers who had fallen into the power of the usurper Maximus, he gave way and received the Eucharist with them. On his way home he sat down in a forest, and debated with himself whether he had acted rightly. An angel appeared, and comforted him with the assurance that his offence was pardoned for the charity which had prompted it. But, from the hour when he entered into fellowship with those men of blood, Martin believed that his miraculous power in some degree departed from him. It is a beautiful story. These popular saints were not so intolerant as the great doctors. Prudentius speaks generously of Symmachus, and even of the apostate Julian, and Paulinus was the friend of Rufinus the Origenist, of Vigilantius the Protestant, of Jerome the bitter enemy of both, of Julianus the Pelagian, and of Augustine the great preacher of free grace, the spiritual father of Luther. Every one of these men, except Julianus, was most unlike himself, yet his large charity embraced them all. He was one of those who judge by the emotions. The heart is a dangerous guide, because sooner or later its tender imaginations fall into the hands of logicians, who petrify them into stony absurdities. Every poetic nature has its extravagances, just as every fountain has its freakish jets and rainbows. Shakespeare, Wordsworth,

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Tennyson, Browning, all great artists, have their manner, which partly marks the individual, and partly belongs to his time. One finds these efflorescences distasteful, and with them condemns the art of which they are but the separable accidents. Another thinks them so admirable that he tries to shape his whole style by the little caprices of great men. It is not otherwise with these saints. You may find in Paulinus without difficulty the germ of all that shocks us in Tetzel, but what in the first is the simple effusion of a childlike faith has been hardened into a system in the other, by the perverse labour of the mediæval theologians.

What we are to see in Paulinus is not grandeur of genius (Tillemont is entirely mistaken in applying this eulogy to him), but a sweet and refined nature, a sensitive conscience, a deep and true humility, a human, friendly, all-embracing charity. You would not ask him to prove anything whatever; if you did you would ask in vain: he is just a beautiful soul, like Thomas a Kempis. In this sense Tillemont's phrase may pass. Paulinus has the genius of charity, which after all is the greatest thing in the world. Few are so like the little child as he. The words which he wrote for Sulpicius to place under the portraits of Martin and himself—"Here Martin stands the rule of perfect life: Paulinus can teach you how pardon is found. Look on him, ye blessed,

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on me, ye sinners. Let him be the pattern for saints, me for the undeserving"[1]—express the beautiful humility and sweetness which breathe in his whole life, and make him, not unjustly, one of the heroes of the mediæval Church.

[1] *Ep.* xxxii.

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III

SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS

CAIUS SOLLIUS APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS, to give him his full name, Sidonius Apollinaris as he is usually called, St. Sidoine Apollinaire as he is entitled in the French calendar, was a man of a very different character from either of those whom we have been considering, though like Paulinus he was a grandee and a bishop, and, like both Paulinus and Prudentius, a high official and a man of letters.

He belongs to a later generation. Born in 431, the date of the Council of Ephesus, nearly twenty years after the establishment of the Goths at Toulouse, and at the time when the Vandals were devastating Africa, he lived to see his native land given over to the rule of skin-clad barbarians, and Odoacer installed as king in Italy. His life covers the final act of the great tragedy of Rome; and in that catastrophe he played a not inconsiderable part as noble, scholar, magistrate, son-in-law of an emperor, and bishop. On one side he is a fine representative of a vanishing race, on the other his story is bound up with the birth of a new world.

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Sidonius sprang from a line of soldiers and statesmen. His great-grandfather had held high office. His grandfather (the first Christian of the family) had been prætorian prefect of all Gaul in the time of that Constantine who, in the reign of Honorius, usurped for some years the name of emperor in the Western provinces, and had "borne himself," says his descendant, "as a freeman in the court of a tyrant." His father became prætorian prefect of Aquitania Prima under Valentinian III. From his ancestors Sidonius inherited high courage, a capacity for business, and a strong sympathy for the sufferings of Gaul. At the age of twenty he married Papianilla, the only daughter of Avitus. He speaks of her with great affection as "a good wife and the best of sisters," but she also sprang from a noble and high-spirited house, and by his marriage Sidonius was drawn into the vortex of the disturbed history of his time. Avitus was a brave, capable, and honest man. While prefect of Gaul he had been brought into personal relations with Theodoric I., King of Toulouse, who became his fast friend. Avitus used his influence over the barbarian chief for good ends, and it was by his persuasion that Theodoric was induced to send his Gothic troops to the help of Aetius in the great battle of Chalons, in which Attila, the Scourge of God, was defeated and forced to retire from Gaul. This was the sunset

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triumph of old Rome, but Avitus and his relatives were almost the only Romans who fought in her cause on that great day. There followed in quick succession the murder of Aetius by Valentinian, the murder of Valentinian himself by Maximus, whose wife he had dishonoured, the frightful sack of Rome by Genseric, who is said to have been invited by the Empress Eudoxia, as Attila is said to have been summoned by Honoria, and as Genseric and his Vandals had been led into Africa by the wretched traitor Boniface. Maximus perished in the massacre. It was at this juncture, when the throne, if there could be said to be a throne, was vacant, that Avitus, who was living in quiet retirement on his estates in Gaul, like Cincinnatus, his grandson says, was persuaded by Theodoric II. of Toulouse, the son and successor of his old friend, to assume the purple. There is no reason to doubt that he was animated by patriotic motives, and that his desire was to heal the wounds by which his country was bleeding to death. But it was too late. Italy was in the hands of the unscrupulous Ricimer, the last of the barbarian *condottieri*. By him, in 456, after a brief reign of about a year, Avitus was dethroned, forced to accept the bishopric of Placentia, fled towards his old home in Auvergne, and died, we do not know how, upon the road.

Sidonius had attended his father-in-law to Rome, and on New Year's Day of 456 pronounced before

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the Senate a panegyric in hexameter verse upon the new emperor and consul. The poem or oration is marked by two features. Firstly, by its frank paganism in style. Jupiter himself addresses the assembled gods, describes in a set speech the miseries of the time and the merits of Avitus, and ends his eulogy with the words, *Hunc tibi, Roma, dedi.* Avitus and Sidonius were both sincere Christians, and in Rome itself paganism, if not extinct, had lost all political importance, yet in this panegyric there is not a word that would have alarmed Virgil or Julian. Education was still entirely secular, the habits of the schools were very strong, and, the moment a Western poet took up his pen, his imagination began to flow in the moulds consecrated by the use of the great singers of the Augustan age. Hence poetry, and especially the hexameter and elegiac, were still strongly heathen, while other metres were tolerably Christian, and prose entirely so. For this reason verse-writing fell into disrepute, and many, like Sidonius himself, abandoned the art, or employed it only for the composition of ecclesiastical inscriptions, as soon as they began to take a serious view of their religious profession. It is greatly to the credit of Prudentius and Paulinus that, though they saw the danger, they were not alarmed by it, and conceived the possibility of a new and thoroughly Christian school of poetry.

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The other feature of the panegyric upon Avitus is more honourable to the author. It has sometimes been alleged that the men of this time shut their eyes to the great catastrophe that was enacting itself in the world around them. It is true that they could hardly bring themselves to believe in the downfall of that great Empire, under the shadow of whose branches all the nations had for so many centuries found refuge. Even in 467 Sidonius speaks of the Rome of Anthemius as "the home of law, the school of letters, the senate-house of dignities, the crown of the world, the native land of liberty, the peerless city of the whole world, in which none but barbarians and slaves are foreigners."[1] Rome was to him, as to many others, another name for civilisation. Sidonius was a strong patriot. He struggled to the last against the inevitable, and died, we may say, with a broken heart. But he saw clearly the evils of the time. "Among these calamities," he says, "this funeral of the world, life has been death. In loyalty to our sires we have obeyed the laws that could not help us, and followed the ancient State along the path to ruin, and borne on our shoulders the shadow of an Empire." Perhaps a saviour might be found in Gaul, and if so, in whom but in the great Arvernian soldier. And so he calls upon Avitus to "lift up the fallen." "Let no man

[1] *Ep.* i. 3.

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love Rome better than thou." I think we must allow that these are worthy sentiments, finely uttered, at a great crisis.[1]

For this panegyric Sidonius received the rather extravagant reward of a bronze statue in the basilica of Trajan. The same honour had been awarded to Claudian, the last of the classics, and to a much less famous bard, Merobaudes. In after years Sidonius looked back upon this public recognition of his merits with great pride. It had immortalised his name, and conferred upon him the power of immortalising others. Some of his letters are written with the avowed object of preserving to future ages the names and merits of his friends. He was vain, but always with a kindly, unselfish vanity.

The hopes built upon Avitus were destined to speedy disappointment, but the Gallic nobles could not resign themselves to destruction without a further effort. Supported apparently by the Burgundians, they adopted Marcellinus, who strangely enough appears to have been a pagan, as their chief. Meanwhile Ricimer had made Majorian emperor. Majorian crossed the Alps in the depth of winter, defeated the Burgundians, and captured the city of Lyons, which had been the chief seat of the movement. Here again we catch a glimpse of Sidonius. As a member of the defeated party, his life and

[1] *Carm.* iv.

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property lay in the disposal of the conqueror. Fortunately for him, Majorian was not only a gallant soldier but a Roman gentleman, and his chief secretary, Peter, was a member of the literary guild. At the expense of a few verses, including a panegyric of much the same kind as that upon Avitus, Sidonius not only rescued himself from grave peril, but obtained for the people of Lyons a remission of the heavy tax which had been laid upon them as a punishment for what the conqueror might justly regard as rebellion. Baret charges Sidonius with servility for his adulation of the victor. It was not the only occasion on which he owed his safety to his silvery tongue, but Majorian was a man who might be praised without too deep a blush. We need not judge harshly of a ruined poet who pays ransom for his neck in courtly words. Rather we may praise the autocrat, who accepts the verses when he might have taken the life.[1]

After the fall of Majorian, during the four years of the reign of Severus, the puppet emperor whom Ricimer, to suit his own convenience, first invested with the purple and then deposed, Sidonius lived in retirement on his wife's estates of Avitacum[2] in the neighbourhood of Clermont. It is of this perhaps

[1] *Carm.* v., vi., vii., viii.

[2] It is perhaps worth observing that the penultimate of Avitacum is long: "Si quis Avitacum dignaris visere nostram," *Carm.* xiv. 1.

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the happiest portion of his life that he has given us the fullest and clearest picture.

The house of Avitacum was one of many fine villas to be found in Central Gaul. Sidonius calls it his "cottage," because it was not adorned with costly foreign marbles, but it must have been a very large and handsome country-house. There were capacious bathrooms.[1] It was customary to adorn these places with lascivious frescoes, which "display the art but degrade the artist," but in the villa of Sidonius the walls of the bath-house were of plain whitewash, and bore no ornament except inscriptions in verse turned by his own dexterous hand. In the wing next to the baths was the private sitting-room of Papianilla, in close proximity to the great storeroom and the room where her busy handmaidens span the wool. All along the front of the house ran the great hall, at one end of which the nurses and female attendants used to congregate in the evenings, and keep up their chattering long after the family had gone to bed. To the south of this lay the winter dining-room, blackened by the smoke of the wood fire;[2] hard by this was the summer dining-room, from which you looked out, across a

[1] These Gallic gentlemen used also an open-air vapour bath. A pit was hollowed out close by a fountain or stream; over this was erected a tent of hair-cloth; red-hot stones were thrown into the pit, and upon these water was poured, *Ep.* ii. 7.

[2] There was no chimney.

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broad flight of shallow steps and a level stretch of turf, towards a lake surrounding a little rocky island, and set in a pleasing frame of wild park-like country; beyond this rose the basaltic hills and extinct volcanoes of Auvergne. Sidonius dwells with great delight on the sights and sounds of his rustic home, the great lime trees under which he played at ball with his wife's brother, the gallant Ecdicius; the fisherman spreading his nets in the lake; the noonday chirp of the cicadas; the croaking of the frogs and the song of the nightingale at dusk; the clanging of the wild geese and swans flying overhead in the darkness; the shepherd's pipe and the sheep-bells. It is a charming scene viewed through the eyes of a charming nature. With all his vanities Sidonius was a man of right feeling and simple affections.[1]

Life passed in these stately villas much as it does in an English country-house of our own time. There was plenty of amusement, much of it in the form of exercise in the open air. These Gallic gentry were fond of dicing (apparently they did not play for money), of ball-play, of hunting with the hawk or hound, of riding, of swimming. They took but two meals a day, the *prandium* at eleven o'clock in the

[1] For Avitacum, see *Ep.* ii. 1. The villas of Ferreolus and Apollinaris are described, *Ep.* ii. 7; the *Burgus* of Pontius Leontius, *Carm.* xix.; the *Octaviana* of Consentius, *Carm.* xx. The *Burgus* (it was situated at the confluence of the Garonne and the Dordogne, and was exposed to attack from the sea) was strongly fortified. It contained a fine collection of pictures; see Baret's *Introduction*, p. 61.

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morning and the *cena* in the evening. Their table habits were moderate and refined, and not uncommonly the domestics and retainers seem to have sat at the same board with the family. After the mid-day meal they took a siesta. Salvian tells us that many of them lived vicious lives, and this is always true of slave-owning societies, and indeed of all aristocracies, not to say of all men. But the circle in which Sidonius moved was very large, and its moral tone was healthy and manly. They were good masters and landlords. They devoted much time to the management of their estates, and Papianilla was doubtless busy enough in her store-closet and wool-room. They were admirable talkers, and their conversation ranged over all subjects of human interest, grave or gay. They were great readers also. In the withdrawing-room of Papianilla you would have found the Bible and religious books, but the gentlemen's library offered a wider choice. There stood all the Latin classics, poets, orators, and historians, and many volumes of Greek. Origen they read in the translation of Rufinus, the *Phædo* of Plato in that of Apuleius, and the *Life of Apollonius* also appeared in a Latin dress. But they seem to have had Plato also in the original, and they knew Plotinus. Even after he became bishop, Sidonius read Menander with his son, pointing out the excellences of the Attic style, and laughing at the jokes, "remembering," he

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says, "my nature, and forgetting my profession."[1] When Nammatius was starting in command of the fleet of Euric against the fierce Saxon buccaneers, Sidonius sends him Varro and the *Chronicle* of Eusebius to while away what little leisure he might find in the midst of his rough and perilous employment. Strange reading, we may think, for a commodore engaged in active and hazardous service.

Let us look here for a moment at the portrait which Sidonius draws of one of his friends, Vectius. "The household," he says, "like its master keeps its chastity unimpaired. The slaves are attentive; the rustics respectful, civil, and content with their patron. The table feeds not only guests but dependants; there is great courtesy and greater sobriety. His horses, dogs, hawks, are the best in the country-side. He loves hunting, but will not eat the venison. He is a widower, and devotes great care to the education of his only child, a daughter. Often he reads the Bible, or has it read, at meal-times, feeding soul and body at once. The Psalms

[1] *Ep.* ii. 7. Sidonius mentions by name Augustine, Varro, Horace, Prudentius; versions of Origen by Rufinus, of Plato's *Phædo* by Apuleius, of the *De Corona* of Demosthenes by Cicero. Sidonius is the last person known to have read Menander, *Ep.* iv. 20. He knew Plotinus (*Ep.* iii. 5) probably, like St. Augustine, from the translation by Victorinus Afer. The *Life of Apollonius* seems to have been a translation made by one Victorianus, not from the work of Philostratus, but from an abridged edition of that work by one Nicomachus, see *Ep.* viii. 7. Sidonius must have had a wide acquaintance with Latin literature. It is to be regretted that he has not left us a complete list of the Greek books which he read in Greek, but they were probably not numerous.

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he constantly reads or chants. In a word he is a perfect monk in the uniform of a soldier. He is a priestly man, and I admire him more than if he had been a priest."[1]

They were kindly and brave these men, scholarly and devout. The most obvious of their faults is literary vanity, which harms no one. They were all Euphuists, like Sir Piercy Shafton, and almost all poets. They could all improvise a quatrain on a bath-towel,[2] or an incident of the table, or anything else. Poets were as common as blackberries in South Gaul. Yet they never speak evil of one another. They abound in flowery compliments, but their praises are quite sincere. Each member of the guild thought the others perfection, called them Phœbus or Orpheus, and gravely compared their poor little effusions with the masterpieces of the classic past. Rather absurd it seems to us; but there is a beautiful sense of comradeship among these high-bred dilettanti. The love of books and

[1] *Ep.* xviii.

[2] See the interesting account of the festival of St. Justus in *Ep.* v. 5. The vigil was before daylight; psalms were sung antiphonally by two choirs, one of monks, one of clergy; the church and the porticos surrounding it were crowded; the whole population was there, each order (*varia ordinum corpora*) in its proper place. Eucharist was celebrated at nine o'clock; all would still be fasting, as *prandium* was not taken till eleven o'clock. In the interval between the two services the gentry assembled at the *conditorium* of Syagrius, where there was a pleasant garden. They amused themselves with talk (eschewing politics), with ball-play, draughts, and dice. Philomatius overheated himself and wiped his face with a towel. Sidonius immediately called for a scribe, who was standing by with his tablets in readiness, and dictated a very bad epigram.

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of art makes them truly brothers, and the tie has a pathetic charm, because they knew well that they were the last of a vanishing race. A little company of graceful singers, we may call them, standing hand in hand on the deck of a sinking ship.

If any of my hearers has read that delightful Chinese novel, *Les deux cousines*, which is easily procurable in Rémusat's adaptation, he will find there a very exact counterpart of Sidonius and his circle. Everything that you might say of the one you might say of the other, excepting that the mandarins were not Christians, and that there were no Goths in China. The men were excellent in many ways, but the times were hopelessly out of joint, and they were as incapable of setting them right as so many Hamlets. Salvian, as I have noticed, draws a very dark picture of Roman vice. His fiery indictment evidently requires qualification, but from what Sidonius himself tells us we can discern the substantial truth of Salvian's words. Some of the barbarian invaders, such as the Huns or Saxons, were merely desperate savages, but others, such as the Goths, were less treacherous, juster, and more chaste than the provincials. They made better governors than the greedy Roman officials, and it seems probable that Salvian is right when he says that in many places the poor welcomed the advent of the new régime.

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After the fall of Severus the Romans, oppressed by fear of Genseric, who by his seizure of Africa had cut off their chief supply of corn and was menacing the coasts of Italy, found themselves compelled to forego their jealous hatred of Constantinople and solicit the aid of the Eastern emperor. Leo, having his own reasons for wishing to break the power of the Vandal pirates, sent Anthemius to be emperor of the West, and the consent of Ricimer to this arrangement was purchased by the stipulation that Anthemius should marry his daughter. Sidonius was in Rome at the time, having been sent thither by the Arvernians on public business, probably to beg for some alleviation of their burdens. By the help of one of the great Roman nobles, Basilius,[1] he was introduced to the court, and found the opportunity of delivering another of his flowery panegyrics.[2] For this, Gibbon says, "the venal poet was rewarded with the prefecture of Rome; a dignity which placed him among the illustrious personages of the Empire, till he wisely preferred the more respectable character of a bishop and a saint." Gibbon did not love bishops or saints, and his judgment of Sidonius is intolerably harsh. We may say in defence of Sidonius that he had not gone to Rome to push his own fortunes, that these fashionable panegyrics were merely formal affairs of no

[1] *Ep.* ix. [2] *Carm.* xxi., xxii.

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more significance than an after-dinner speech, that Anthemius was a very worthy person, and that the poet would hail his arrival with sincere delight. Of Ricimer he said as little as he could. Probably he hoped that Anthemius would treat that arrogant barbarian as Leo had treated Aspar, whom he used and discarded, kicking down, as soon as he conveniently could, the ladder by which he had climbed to the throne. He praises Ricimer for nothing but courage, and Ricimer's courage could not be denied. But it cannot have been a pleasant task for Sidonius to bestow even this limited commendation on the man who had been for years the evil genius of the West, and had sent Avitus to his death.

But he made an excellent prefect, and here Gibbon might have found something to say for him. It is commonly alleged that the nobility of this time had no public spirit, and the accusation is not wholly without foundation, as we have seen in the case of Paulinus. But no such blame can be cast upon Sidonius. He was ambitious of serving his country, and of serving it well. He tells Eutropius, a young man of good birth and of wealth, that he ought not to rust in the country, but go to Rome and seek service under the emperor.[1] In another letter he exhorts Eutropius, who had been created prefect of Gaul, to remember the high duties of his station.

[1] *Ep.* i. 3.

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"The provincials," he says, "reckon a good year not by good crops but by good governors."[1] Writing to his wife Papianilla, even after he became a bishop, he expresses the hope that his son will follow in his own footsteps and rise even higher.[2] It was not merely the pay and the pomp that Sidonius desired, nor would he serve any master. There were Romans who accepted office under the barbarians, like Leo the secretary and Nammatius the admiral of Euric. There were traitors who, while pocketing the emperor's wages, intrigued with the barbarians, such as Arvandus and Seronatus. Sidonius may have been a little supple, a little ingratiating; it was a perilous age, and flattery is often a useful shield. But his heart was that of a thoroughbred Roman. He did yeoman service to the falling Empire, and spent himself at his post.

On the expiration of his office Sidonius returned quietly to his native land, and appears to have resided for a time in Lyons. Here the bishop, Patiens, his attached friend, had just built a great church on the steep bank of the Arar, between the river and the main street. Faustus of Riez preached the dedication sermon, and several of the best-known of the Gallic poets wrote verses on the occasion. Those of Sidonius are worth quoting both for their grace and as a counterpoise to

[1] *Ep.* iii. 5. [2] *Ep.* v. 18.

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his rather heathenish hexameters. The church stood—

> Betwixt the noisy street and rushing Arar;
> To right the clatter of feet and hoofs of horses,
> And teamsters urging on their creaking waggons,
> To left the chorus of the straining boatmen,
> Timing their heavy oars to Christ the Pilot,
> While all the cliffs re-echo Alleluia,
> So chant ye farers by the way, ye boatmen;
> This is the house of Him whom all must honour;
> Here all shall find the one way of salvation.[1]

Sidonius loved Lyons and the haunts of men. But the province of Lugdunensis Prima was given up by Anthemius to the Burgundians as the price of their assistance against the Visigoths of Toulouse. Sidonius could not exist under the rule of these fierce and gigantic barbarians—seven feet high he says they were—and took up his abode at Avitacum once more. But troubles were thickening, and from this point begins the saddest and noblest chapter of his life.

In 467 he was made bishop of the chief town of Auvergne, Clermont as we now call it. Gibbon might have spared his fling at bishops. It was a

[1] *Ep.* ii. 14. We read of Patiens also in *Ep.* iv. 4, vi. 12, and *Carm.* xviii. He was a great church builder, and had some success in converting the Burgundians from their Arian ways. His great glory is the noble munificence which he displayed in 473–4 when the country was devastated by famine. Eight cities were relieved by his bounty. He was on friendly terms with the ascetic and philosophical Faustus of Riez, who believed that the heathen were not wholly outside the pale of divine grace, and has been denounced as a semi-Pelagian (it is noticeable that he was a Breton). Sidonius also was much attached to Faustus to whom he directed two of his Epistles, ix. 8, 10.

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heavy task to which the cheery poet was summoned, and he knew its nature very well. In Gaul especially the bishop was the sole protector left to the miserable provincials. He interfered, as far as he could, in cases of individual hardship. He pleaded their cause in courts of law. Sometimes a whole country-side, devastated by fire and sword, had to be fed, and Patiens of Lyons undertook this burden. Basilius of Aix interceded with the fierce Arian, Euric of Toulouse, whose hand was heavy on the Catholics.[1] Another bishop, Julian,[2] we find exerting his influence for peace between the Romans and the Goths. Græcus of Marseilles was appointed by the Emperor Nepos to negotiate the treaty which transferred Auvergne to the King of Toulouse.[3] Often the bishop displayed a courage worthy of the best traditions of Rome. Anianus encouraged the citizens of Orleans in their stubborn and happily successful resistance to the dreadful Attila,[4] and Sidonius himself was the heart and soul of the defence of Clermont.

How he became bishop he does not tell us, but it was almost certainly under pressure which he could not resist. The power of the laity in the election of bishops seems to have almost expired before this in the East, at any rate there is no mention of the

[1] *Ep.* vii. 7.
[2] *Ep.* ix. 4.
[3] For Græcus, see *Ep.* vi. 9; vii. 9, 13; ix. 3.
[4] *Ep.* viii. 13.

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laity in the Canons of Nicæa; but in the West it was still considerable and at times decisive. Sidonius has given an interesting account of his own action in the case of the metropolitan see of Bourges.[1] There was a crowd of candidates for the vacant office, some of whom had not scrupled to offer to pay for votes out of the episcopal estates. But the laity requested Sidonius to act for them, and the presbyters, with some reluctance, acquiesced in this devolution of authority. Sidonius passed over the whole of the clerical candidates, and chose one Simplicius, a layman. He was a man of good birth and breeding, rich, hospitable, and generous; but above all he was resolute and fit for affairs. More than once he had stood as ambassador for Bourges before the skin-clad kings of the Goths and the purple-robed princes of the Romans. Sidonius himself had probably been elected in much the same way, and for much the same reasons. It is curious to notice that Gregory Nazianzen speaks with severe condemnation of bishops who had been transferred from office under the State to office in the Church. But in the West a large number of the very best bishops were men of this type. They were not appointed by the emperor, but selected by the people, who knew quite well the kind of man they wanted.

[1] *Ep.* vii. 4, 5.

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By this time the greater part of Gaul was in the possession of the invaders. The Franks were pushing on in the north, where St. Remigius,[1] famous in the coterie of Sidonius as an orator, more famous still as the apostle of Clovis, was already at work. The Burgundians were masters of Lyons, and in the south and centre the Visigoths under Euric, who had murdered his brother Theodoric II., as Theodoric had murdered Thorismund, were gradually occupying the whole of the country between the Rhone and the Loire. The district afterwards known as Berry, the land of the old Bituriges, was seized by Euric in 473, and Auvergne was left like an island in the sea, surrounded by barbarians, by the Burgundians on the east and the Visigoths on the other three sides. As yet the leaders of the invaders professed to be vassals and even protectors of Rome, and bore titular offices under the Roman emperor. But the provincials could hardly cherish illusions as to the real state of affairs. At last in 474 Auvergne was invaded by the Goths. Clermont was besieged and held out with great gallantry. But there was no hope of deliverance. Some support they received from the Burgundians, but it was insufficient. For more than a year the country was harried by the Goths, and finally in 475 the Emperor Nepos found himself compelled to cede Auvergne to Euric.

[1] *Ep.* ix. 6.

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During this time of disaster Sidonius did not flinch from his post, but took his full share of the hardships and privations of his people. Ecdicius,[1] his gallant brother-in-law, cut his way in to the town at the head of a score of horsemen, but, except for this brilliant feat of arms, the story is one of stubborn endurance. Sidonius did what he could to keep up the spirit of the Arvernians; he sent for Constantius,[2] a noble, a poet, and a priest like himself, renowned also for eloquence as a preacher. Constantius made his way into Clermont in the depth of winter, and his sermons had much effect. Sidonius instituted also Rogations or litanies sung in procession, a ceremony which had been lately introduced into the Gallic church by his neighbour, Mamertus of Vienna.[3] But there were dissensions within the town itself, and there were Romans serving in the ranks of the enemy. The inevitable end had come, and the Arvernians, the countrymen of that Vercingetorix who for a time had baffled the arms of Julius Cæsar himself, were compelled to bow beneath the yoke of the Visigoths. Sidonius poured out his grief in a letter of pas-

[1] *Ep.* iii. 13. [2] *Ep.* iii. 12.

[3] *Ep.* vii. 12. The Archbishop of Vienna is to be distinguished from his brother, Claudianus Mamertus, who acted as his coadjutor bishop (or senior priest?). Claudianus was a man of universal accomplishments, zealous for church music, and the author of an improved Lectionary. See his epitaph, *Ep.* iv. 21. He waged a warm controversy with Faustus of Riez on the nature of the soul. Sidonius read the treatises of both, complimented both in the highest terms, but refrained from expressing an opinion on the point at issue. See *Ep.* iv. 10; v. 13; ix. 8.

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sionate indignation to Græcus of Marseilles, who had negotiated the surrender on behalf of the emperor. "Your security," he says, "has been purchased by our slavery, the slavery of Arvernians. . . . Other regions in the hour of their betrayal may hope for a lenient master, we can expect nothing but vengeance."

How far this fear was realised we do not know, but it was not the policy of the Goths to wage wars of extermination; they do not even appear, as a rule, to have deprived the nobles of their estates. Sidonius, however, had played too conspicuous a part to escape altogether. But here again his facile pen proved his best protector. Leo,[1] the chief minister of Euric, was one of the stars of Gallic scholarship and literature, and stood by his friend in his misfortunes. For a time Sidonius appears to have been kept in a kind of "free custody" at Livia and at Bordeaux, and to have been deprived of part or of the whole of his property. But he made verses for Euric, verses for his queen Ragnahilda,[2] verses and a translation of Apollonius for Leo.[3] Finally he was allowed to return to Clermont under the surveillance of Victorius, the newly

[1] *Ep.* iv. 24; see also ix. 13, 14. Leo claimed descent from Cornelius Fronto, the tutor of Marcus Aurelius, *Ep.* viii. 7.

[2] *Ep.* iv. 3.

[3] A revision rather of the translation of Victorianus. Sidonius wrote it at Livia, where night, he says, was made hideous by the brawling of two tipsy Gothic women. He had a great admiration for Apollonius, whose life he thought a model of simplicity and abstemiousness, *Ep.* viii. 7.

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appointed governor of Euric, who, being a devout Catholic and a man of cultivation, seems to have made things as easy as he could.

At this point the curtain drops. The last book of the Letters of Sidonius, which was not published till about 483, adds little of positive fact. We just catch a glimpse of him, still writing to his friends though the winter is so severe that the ink is frozen, still occasionally composing a copy of verses for recitation at a dinner-party, and going about his diocese with diligence and cheerfulness. He died in the year 489, and was buried in the church of St. Saturninus at Clermont. This church having been destroyed in the tenth century, his body was at that time translated to the church of St. Genesius. But this also has now perished, and what became of the remains of Sidonius no man knows.

In modern times harsh judgments have been passed upon Sidonius. He has been accused of insincerity and hypocrisy. We have already seen the ground on which this accusation rests. He flattered Euric, and before his consecration he wrote verses, some, though not all, of which make very free use of heathen mythology. On this latter point there is something more that ought to be said. No man of his age believed so little in the heathen gods as Sidonius. Martin of Tours, Paulinus, Sulpicius Severus hated the deities of Olympus because they feared them. They had

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dethroned them, but they still regarded them as formidable demons who had great powers for evil, entering into men's bodies and driving them mad. There is a curious passage in the Life of Martin which tells us that Jupiter was merely a stupid brute who could be cast out with ease, but Mercury, the god of eloquence, was far more obstinate and cunning. So low had the gods of Olympus fallen, yet so strong was still their hold upon the minds of men. But to Sidonius and to Ausonius, Jupiter and his fellows are nothing whatever but poetical machinery, just as they are to Shakespeare. Hence Sidonius, even after his consecration, could read Menander, as a modern bishop might read him, if he had the chance, to amuse his scanty leisure. But Jerome, Augustinè, Paulinus, are harassed by bitter scruples. They constantly quote the classic authors; in their hearts they love them; yet they cannot cast out the haunting fear that the admiration of things beautiful might prove to be a sin. You may remember the famous dream of Jerome, in which the angel repels him from heaven because he was a Ciceronian and not a Christian. If this puritanism had prevailed, as it very nearly did, the classics would have perished altogether. It is to liberal Christians like Sidonius that we owe their preservation.

We may go further and say that Sidonius was eminent precisely for sincerity. He was a poet, but he had no illusions except as to the merits of his

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friends, a very generous fault. At all times he was a Christian gentleman. After his consecration there was no violent change. What he had given to the State he gave henceforth to the Church, but his ideal remained the same as ever, that of simple, manly, reasonable service. He was no theologian, and does not pretend to be, but he took a scholarly interest in the text of Scripture, and Gregory of Tours attributed to him the composition of certain Masses. What he did to popularise the use of Rogations has been already noticed. He constantly alludes to Scripture, but hardly ever quotes it, and his letters to his friends are letters, and not sermons like those of Paulinus. He wrought no miracles, and attributes no miracles to others, and the growing passion for relics and the cult of martyrs finds neither support nor illustration from his pages. Strip him of his mantle of Euphuism and you will find him always sensible and candid. He was no ascetic, yet he was the friend of ascetics like the Persian Abraham,[1] and among his correspondents are a whole galaxy of saints, including Lupus and Remigius. Finally, his Arvernian people, among whom his whole life had been spent, revered him from the day of his death as a saint himself.

It is absurd to doubt the candour of such a man.

[1] See Sidonius' epitaph on Abraham, *Ep.* vii. 16. He was born in Persia, suffered there in the persecution instituted by Isdigerd and Varahran (*Theodoret*, *H. E.* v. 38), and sought refuge in the West, where he became abbot of St. Cirgues at Clermont.

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But it must be owned that he is a saint of a very remarkable order, a great noble and landlord, a man of letters, magistrate, statesman, who became a bishop, not in order that he might fly from the world and shut his ears to its cries, but in order that he might protect his beloved Arvernians from the Goths. It is a fine but rare type of sanctity, very practical and very modern. He was not a polemic, not a mystic, not a janissary of the Pope—indeed he never mentions the Pope, though he visited Rome in the time of the great Leo; he was not an apostle and evangelist like his friend Remigius. But he gave himself freely for the souls and bodies of his own people in a time of dire tribulation, and his people gratefully honoured his name as that of a true servant of Christ.

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IV

GROSSETESTE

PROBABLY I shall best discharge the pleasant duty laid upon me by the delegates for University Extension by taking for the subject of my lectures the religious aspect of that period of history upon which you have been engaged—the period from 1215 to 1485. It is a period of the greatest interest and importance, beginning with the first Renaissance, with the recovery of the philosophy of Aristotle, and ending with the second Renaissance, with the recovery of all Greek literature, more especially of the poets. It begins, again, with the Crusades; it ends with the finding of the Cape of Good Hope in 1486 and of America in 1492. Yet again, it begins with the literature of the monastery composed in Latin; it ends in the literature of the people written in the vernacular tongues, and in the invention of the printing press.

For the history of religion the time is not less significant. It begins with the completion and triumph of the system of the Latin Church—I say of the Latin Church because we must not forget that

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there was also a Greek Church, though the story of that great communion has come only incidentally beneath your notice. To the thirteenth century belong the submission of King John, and the overthrow of the Emperor Frederic II.; the establishment of the rule of confession, and the definition of Transubstantiation; the suppression of Averroism and the Albigensians; the great all-embracing theories of St. Thomas Aquinas; the rise of the mendicant orders. In the fifteenth century you find Savonarola, and the Reformation is close at hand.

What you have been studying is, in fact, the history of the great transition from the old world to the new. Now I am not going to tell you what was the ideal of the Middle Age nor what were its leading characteristics. Other lecturers will explain to you the philosophy of the great secular movement. But let us ask how it fared with the religious life amidst all the tumult of this age of progress. As the old order changeth giving place to new, God fulfils Himself in many ways. Let us try to see how this was; how man's sense of the Eternal bestirred itself to grapple with and to guide the shifting conditions of the world of time. We shall do this best by taking three typical figures—for the thirteenth century that of a great spiritual autocrat, Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln; for the fourteenth that of a great but premature reformer, John Wycliffe; for the fifteenth that

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of a great mystic, Thomas a Kempis. I regret that for the last instance it should be necessary to take a foreigner, but I can find no name in English history that suits the purpose equally well.

Robert Grosseteste was born about 1175 at Stradbrook, in the county of Suffolk. He was a son of the soil, coming from the ranks of the peasantry. Of his kinsfolk we know but two. One, his sister Juetta, became a nun. The other was a *veredarius*,[1] which means apparently a country carrier. After he became a bishop Grosseteste was asked to make some provision for this poor relation. He replied, "If his cart is broken I will mend it, if it cannot be repaired I will buy him a new one, but be sure of this, that I will never change his condition." The story illustrates a leading feature in the great bishop's character, his scrupulous integrity and abhorrence of bribery and favouritism. From his peasant ancestors Grosseteste inherited a rough and masterful temper. But his manners are said to have been distinguished by polished courtesy, and it is highly noticeable that, in spite of his autocratic ways and his unsparing frankness towards great men and small, he never seems to have made a lasting enemy, and died beloved by the English people.

He received his first education, no doubt, at some

[1] *Ep.* viii. is directed to Juetta. For the *veredarius*, see *Monumenta Franciscana*, p. 65.

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monastic school, and thence was sent up to finish his studies in Oxford. He is said also, and the statement is probably true, to have spent some time at the University of Paris.[1] There was much communication between the two great homes of learning, and the French schools owed much of their fame to English doctors, among whom were Michael Scot, Alexander Hales, William Sherwood, John of St. Giles, Edmund Rich, the saintly Archbishop of Canterbury, and Adam Marsh, the lifelong friend of Grosseteste. The English students at Paris bore an ill repute for brawls and turbulence. But they were remarked as the most eager to learn and the readiest to draw new consequences from admitted principles. Hauréau adds that the chief masters were not French but English.[2]

Some time after Grosseteste took his degree, we find him attached to the household of William de Vere, Bishop of Hereford. We have a letter of Giraldus Cambrensis[3] in which he is commended to the bishop as a man expert in law and medicine, and likely to be useful in both capacities, more especially as his religious character is above suspicion. I will draw

[1] See Luard, *Pref.* p. xxxii. Dr. Rashdall doubts the statement, ii. p. 521.

[2] *Philosophie Scolastique*, ii. p. 185. Nearly all the great Franciscan doctors were English. In 1260 Pope Alexander IV. wrote: "We cannot discover any kingdom or province in the whole world which has a greater or even so great an abundance" of learned men. It is true that he is answering the complaint of the barons that, owing to papal provisions, learning had decayed in England; Blaauw, *Barons' War*, p. 77.

[3] It is given in Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, ii. 344.

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your attention especially to the last clause of this eulogy. Grosseteste was, says Giraldus, a physician, and yet a Christian. We are accustomed to think of the misunderstandings between faith and science as the special trouble of our own days. But at the beginning of the thirteenth century, when the Arab commentators dominated the schools, infidelity was as rife and as keen as in the time of Voltaire.[1] It is a great error to think of the reign of Henry III. as the age of unquestioning faith. Indeed it is in one way a comfort to know that there never was such an age.

Had Grosseteste continued in this employment he might have become one of those beneficed State officials whom in later life he detested. But, if he had any ambition in this direction, it was cut short by the death of Bishop de Vere in 1199. Grosseteste returned to Oxford, devoted himself to the study of the Bible and theology, and became a sort of combination of Westcott and Bentley, uniting the erudition of both with the mystical devoutness of the one and the imperious nature of the other. At Oxford he remained from about 1200 to 1235. In 1211 we see him there as rector of the schools,[2] a title which a few years later was changed into that of chancellor.

It must have been during this period that Grosse-

[1] For proof of this statement the reader may be referred to Renan's *Averroès*, or Hauréau, or Milman.

[2] See Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, ii. p. 354.

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teste amassed his great erudition, and laid the foundation for his European reputation. His attainments were very considerable both in depth and in range. Latin, of course, he wrote and spoke habitually. French was the tongue of polite society in England; Grosseteste not only used it, but holds a place among the troubadours. He knew Greek also, and this was a rare accomplishment, though it was becoming more common through the intercourse with the East fostered by the Crusades. He collected Greek books, such as the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Epistles of Ignatius, and the works of Dionysius the Areopagite, and caused them to be translated by scholars in his employ. Roger Bacon says that his knowledge of Greek was but slender, and that on this account Grosseteste was obliged to depend upon the help of others. This statement, however, is not strictly accurate, for we find him sending to the Abbot of Peterborough a treatise on the monastic life, translated from the Greek original by his own hand.[1] In philosophy he ranks as a master; he had read at least the

[1] *Ep.* lvii. See Luard, *Pref.* pp. xii., xxxiii. Grosseteste composed a Romançal poem on *The Sin of the First Man*, of 1700 verses, still extant (Blaauw, *Barons' War*, p. 78; Rashdall, ii. p. 521). He had read the *Ethics* of Aristotle; see *Monumenta Franciscana*, p. 114. Marsh does not say that the MS. was in Greek. "The first translation of the *Ethics* direct from the Greek was made under his directions," Rashdall, ii. 521. For the introduction of Aristotle into the West, at first in versions from the Arabic, afterwards in versions directly made from the original, see Renan, *Averroès*; C. Jourdain, *La philosophie de St. Thomas d'Aquin*; Hauréau.

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Ethics of Aristotle in the original, commented on the Arabic versions of other books, and was for long famous in the schools as *Lincolniensis*. He had a considerable knowledge of mathematics, and was keenly interested in physical science, which was making its first show of life, especially among the Franciscans. He wrote on politics, and on agriculture, a subject with which this noble peasant was not ashamed to show his familiarity. He was a great lover of music,[1] and, finally, he was an indefatigable preacher and commentator upon Holy Scripture. His love for the Bible is legible in all that he wrote. Roger Bacon speaks of Grosseteste and Adam Marsh as "the greatest clerks in the world, perfect in divine and human wisdom," and places them on a level with Aristotle and Solomon. So great was the reputation of Grosseteste with the vulgar, that he was believed to have made a head of brass that could answer any question that was asked.

He was a man of massive intelligence who took all the works of God for his province. Beginning with the highest abstractions of religion and metaphysics, he used them only as the key to the concrete and the practical. Always before his mind was the vision of the perfect state, the perfect diocese, the

[1] For his love of music, see the quotation from Robert de Brunne given by Luard, *Preface*, xii.

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perfect farm, the perfect household. In all these regions he saw exactly what ought to be, and bent the whole force of his resolute nature to realise it in himself and in others. Everybody, from king and pope to his own footman, should do his duty, or Grosseteste would know the reason why; and, as he was at once a most pleasant, a most formidable, and a most intelligent man, he generally attained his object.

In philosophy he belongs to the earlier flight of the new schoolmen, coinciding in date with Albert the Great and William of Auvergne, and coming rather before St. Thomas. He was an idealist and a mystic, very similar in the general line of his thoughts to our own Bishop Berkeley. Perhaps you may have heard of that amazing treatise, in which Berkeley begins by describing the medicinal virtues of tar-water, and ends by dissolving the whole fabric of the solid world into pure spirit. I must not try to carry you through all these mysteries. Let me only say that the idealist holds that nothing which can be seen or touched has any reality or existence outside of mind. All that is true in the objects of sense is their meaning, their law, their purpose. We call them things, but they are nothing more than signs and symbols, like letters or words in a book, by which God opens his mind to ours. They are the thoughts of the Creator expressed by certain

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marks, just as you express your thoughts by scratches of ink on a sheet of paper. This is the idea which Grosseteste tries to convey by his scholastic phrase that "God is the Form of all things,"[1]—in everything the permanent, the intelligible, that which gives it existence, beauty, usefulness, meaning, is God.

Now, how do we read these words in the book of Nature? Partly by study, but mainly by what we know already. You must know the language; you must be in sympathy with the message of the book. There must be something in you to which the book appeals, an eye as it were that can see what many people cannot see at all. And what is this eye? Some call it Intelligence, but its better name is Love. "One day," says Grosseteste, "we shall know God face to face, as even now some choice spirits know him, by Love."

You will forgive me for the introduction of this dose of metaphysics. I want you to observe two or three things. First, that these great Schoolmen

[1] *Ep.* i., to Adam Rufus. Grosseteste appears to have derived his doctrine mainly from St. Augustine, but he was well acquainted with Dionysius the Areopagite, though he does not here refer to him. With this first epistle should be read the next, written to console the Oxford Franciscans for the loss of Adam Rufus, who had been sent by Pope Gregory to preach to the Saracens. Rufus died a martyr's death at a place called Barlete, and a vision announcing his end was sent to Adam Marsh. Marsh dreamed that he and Rufus came to a castle, on the gate of which was a cross. Both kissed the cross, but Rufus passed swiftly through the gate, climbed a winding staircase and vanished. Marsh pursued him crying, "Go slower; go slower," but found his brother no more.—*Mon. Fran.* p. 15.

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were not merely dry old pedants, whose ideas were ridiculous when they were not unmeaning. That would be very far indeed from the truth.

Again, you have here the key to Grosseteste's character. What toil he had spent in amassing his vast erudition! But see what he tells you after all; it is love, not learning, that teaches all that is best worth knowing. See how tenderness and purity underlie all the strength and masterfulness of this resolute man, how the finished scholar ends by becoming once more like a little child. Lastly, in this view of love, as the source of all wisdom, which Grosseteste had gathered from St. John, from St. Augustine, from that mystical writer whom we know as Dionysius the Areopagite, and no doubt also from his own experience, you will find that he is in perfect agreement with a Kempis. This laborious and encyclopædic student, whose fame filled the schools of Oxford and Paris, will tell you just the same thing as the little Dutch monk who had no learning at all. The great misfortune of Wycliffe was that he was not sympathetic.

Among those choice spirits who have had love for their teacher Grosseteste no doubt reckoned St. Francis of Assisi. I must not dwell upon that extraordinary and most beautiful figure. You ought to read the *Speculum Perfectionis*, and try to seize the spirit of that fascinating, bewildering "Song to

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Little Sister Death," in which you will find the quintessence of the Franciscan spirit, the like of which has never been seen in the world, before or since. Tenderness, cheerfulness, poverty, the active service of the poor, and the scorn of all conventions, were the marks impressed upon his Friars Minor by this child of Nature and of God, half angel and half nightingale.

The Franciscans[1] entered Oxford during the lifetime of their founder in November 1224. The Dominicans had come a little while before. They made their home on a piece of ground given to them by a pious citizen, Richard de Muliner, in the parish of St. Ebbe's (where Paradise Square still preserves the memory of the paradise or garden of the Convent of the Grey Friars), choosing, as was their wont, the poorest and most miserable part of the filthy mediæval town for their abode. St. Francis greatly distrusted secular learning, but his friars were caught at once by the spirit of Oxford. For their preaching, for their medical work, knowledge was indispensable. Very soon Brother Agnellus built "a decent school" for the use of the Grey Friars, and hither came Grosseteste, the chief man of the University and one of the most famous scholars of the age, to lecture to them. Under such guidance the simple friars soon became renowned for their

[1] See for all this, the *Monumenta Franciscana.*

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skill in all arts that concern either the cure of the body or the health of the soul.

Grosseteste always loved the friars, kept them about his person and found in them his most trusty allies. He tells Pope Gregory[1] how people run to hear the word of life from them; and we can understand the effectiveness of their preaching when we read in the *Monumenta Franciscana* the authentic description of their simplicity, their playfulness, their love of anecdote, and the kindly shrewdness of their observations upon life. The masterful prelate is seen in his most attractive aspect in his intercourse with the friars. On one occasion, when he had quarrelled with them and for a time would not speak to them, Brother Peter said to him, "If you were to give us all your wealth, but turn from us in your heart, the brothers would not be content." The bishop wept, and replied, "Oh, you bad man, you try me very hard, for I cannot help loving you, though I show you such a countenance."[2] He told a Dominican friar that three things are necessary for bodily health: food, sleep, and laughter. Another, who was of a melancholy frame, he ordered to drink a cup of the best wine by way of mortification, adding, "Dear brother, if you often had such a penance, you would have a healthier conscience." He said again that he loved to see the brothers' frocks

[1] *Ep.* lviii.

[2] *Monumenta Franciscana*, p. 65.

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with patches on them.[1] Yet again, when he heard a friar maintain in a sermon that poverty was the highest step on the ladder to heaven, Grosseteste said to him, "There is a higher; that every man should live by the labour of his own hands."[2] Here we observe the sound common-sense of the English peasant, and the prescience of the Christian philosopher. Poverty, understood as mendicancy, was the rock on which the friars went to wreck. Mayors and aldermen, who knew well the excellence of their work, heaped wealth upon them; and, when the tide of municipal favour began to ebb, they found themselves obliged to seek money by unworthy arts. But in the thirteenth century the friars were admirable, and their services to the nation can hardly be exaggerated.

The coming of the friars suggested an organised effort for the conversion of the Jews. The old Jewry at Oxford, down to the time of the expulsion of all Jews from the kingdom in 1290, extended from the High Street to the north side of the great quadrangle of Christ Church in one direction, and from St. Aldate's to the line of Alfred Street on the other. It lay thus in the very heart of the city, and occupied a strategic position on the flank of religious processions moving down St. Aldate's to the church of St. Frideswide, the present cathe-

[1] *Monumenta Franciscana*, p. 64. [2] Ibid., p. 69.

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dral. There were many brawls in consequence, in some of which the Jews were the aggressors. One occurred about 1180; again on Ascension Day 1268, when the chancellor was going in state to preach the University sermon at St. Frideswide's, a Jew rushed upon him, seized the cross which was carried before him, and trod it under foot. It was in 1233 that a *Domus Conversorum*, standing in the Jewry on the site of the present Town Hall, was opened under the management of the Dominican friars, from whose preaching great results were expected, not altogether in vain. Grosseteste was greatly interested in the movement, but he took a hard view of the Jews. Two years before these unfortunate people had been expelled from Leicester by the earl. The Countess of Winchester, a devout widow, took compassion upon them, and proposed to find a home for them on her estates, probably at Empingham where Grosseteste held a prebend. He told her that she must not do so. The Jews are an accursed race, because they crucified our Lord and still mock at His Passion. Yet they have the Apostle's promise, that, when the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, they shall be saved. Meanwhile they are justly kept in a state of captivity under secular princes. They are not to be killed, but they are not to be allowed to grind the faces of Christians with usury. Rather they should

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be compelled to earn an honest living by tilling the ground. It is a hard view, though not hard for those times. We may observe that, while the Jews of France and Spain were active agents in introducing Greek and Arab literature into the West, their compatriots in England do not appear to have exhibited any interest in learning. Possibly Grosseteste might have judged them more favourably if they had brought him Greek manuscripts.[1] As it is, we can only say with regret that he was less humane than the good Margaret de Quincy. But it should be remembered that usury was still regarded with great horror by all Christian people. Even in its beneficent forms it was denounced, and in a community of farmers, in a time when our modern system of banking was unknown, it must often have been attended by rapacity and oppression.

In 1235 Grosseteste became Bishop of Lincoln by election of the chapter. The diocese was of very great extent, including the counties of Lincoln, Lei-

[1] *Ep.* v. For the general treatment of the Jews by Church law at this time, see the Council of Oxford in 1222, in Wilkins, i. 585. In Oxford the Little Jewry stood between High Street, Blue Boar Street, St. Aldate's, and Alfred Street; the Great Jewry between Blue Boar Street, St. Aldate's, the north side of Tom Quad., and a continuation of Alfred Street. The synagogue was between the Archdeacon's Lodging and Tom Gate. The Jews' burial-ground was the present Botanical Gardens. The late Mr. Neubauer informed me that in his opinion the Jews contributed nothing to the learning of Oxford. In the vestry of Christ Church is the fragment of a cross, which some suppose to have formed part of a cross which the king ordered the Jews to erect by way of expiation for the outrage of 1268. See Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford*, i. p. 32; also Neubauer's *Collectanea*, O. H. S., ii. p. 286; Meade Falkner, *History of Oxfordshire*, p. 82.

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cester, Buckingham, Huntingdon, Northampton, Bedford, and Oxford. As bishop he was governor of the University of Oxford.

I must not dwell upon the relations of the great bishop to our University; let two points suffice. It is to Grosseteste that we owe the introduction of an examination system "after the custom of Paris."[1] Also we have a fine letter[2] in which he impresses upon the regents the vital importance of the study of Scripture. The Old and New Testaments, he says, are the foundation-stones, and he goes on to insist—and this is the great point—that things which are not fundamental are not to be confounded with things that are. It is a great lesson, and it comes well from this fine scholar who practised what he preached. Not the glosses, not the Book of Sentences, not even the Fathers—these are not the fundamentals. Grosseteste himself constantly appeals to the "irrefragable authority of Scripture," and he wished his clerks to shape their life and doctrine by the same rule. But let us pass from this topic, interesting as it is to all Oxonians, and try to see in what condition he found the Church and nation, and how he endeavoured to amend them. For this great man certainly laboured to serve God in his generation

[1] Luard, *Preface*, lxvi.

[2] *Ep.* cxxiii. We should notice also his establishment of a chest in St. Frideswide's, from which poor scholars could borrow such sums as they needed, Rashdall, ii. p. 350.

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with admirable ability and devotion. He was no reformer, nor were reformers called for in that age. But, finding himself placed in a high position and armed with great authority, he toiled in season and out of season, for fear of hell and for love of the Saviour, to make all men tread the path of duty. He was, as I have ventured to call him, a spiritual autocrat, and it is of great importance to know how far he succeeded in his efforts.

His visitations were extraordinarily severe. He would go through a monastery from cellar to garret, breaking open all locked doors, and looking into everything with his own penetrating eyes. He spared no one that he found vicious or incompetent. A prior of St. Frideswide's, an abbess of Godstow, and many other dignitaries, including even abbots of royal monasteries, with whom he had no right to interfere, were deposed. But he appears to have found no evils that proper discipline would not mend.[1] He was jealous also for the education of the clergy,[2] and insisted that they should preach

[1] On his visitation of the regulars, see Luard. For royal monasteries, see *Ep.* xxx. The alien priories were worse than the English, because the foreign houses to which they belonged sent their bad monks to England to get rid of them, *Ep.* liii.

[2] As regards the secular clergy, he makes many complaints of the presentation of improper persons: the kinsman of the Chancellor of York, *Ep.* xix.; a son of Earl Ferrers, recommended by the legate Otho, *Ep.* lii.; one, presented by a monk, who had no tonsure, wore a scarlet coat and rings, was altogether more like a soldier than a layman, and almost illiterate, *Ep.* xi. His inquisitions extended to the laity, see Luard, pp. lxvii., lxx. He turned a fair out of the church-

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frequently in English, as he did himself. Here also he spared no one. When the Chancellor of York complained that his nephew had been rejected in his ordination examination, Grosseteste replied by sending him the young man's papers; and, when Passelew was appointed Bishop of Chichester, Grosseteste examined and plucked him. But here we come to the centre of his difficulties. Passelew was a forest judge, one of those lawyers who were provided for by church preferment, and this practice Grosseteste rightly regarded as a crying evil. But here he came into collision with the Pope on the one hand, and with the king on the other. How could he secure the efficiency of his clergy when the Pope was sending over foreign ecclesiastics, as many as three hundred in one year,[1] to be provided with fat English benefices, and the king again was thrusting his judges, architects, clerks of accounts, and, indeed, the whole civil service, into spiritual offices, to get from the Church the salaries which

yard of All Saints at Northampton, *Ep.* xxi.; denounced Scotales, *Ep.* xxii.; and the Feast of Fools at Lincoln, *Ep.* xxxii. He insisted that every parish clergyman should know the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Sacraments, and the form of Baptism, should be able to explain the Creed and the *Quicunque Vult*, should preach frequently in English, and diligently read Scripture. Scripture should be the basis of all sermons, "like the poles that carry the Ark." Further, the clergy should teach the children the Lord's Prayer, Ave Maria, the use of the sign of the Cross, and take care that all adults knew these things, *Ep.* lii. Attention should have been called in the text to Grosseteste's zeal for the proper endowment of vicarages; see Luard, pp. xlix., lxxi., lxxvi.

[1] This was in 1240; see Luard, xlviii.

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the royal exchequer was unable to supply?[1] Grosseteste fought like a man. "I know," he wrote to the legate Otho, "that my lord the Pope, and the holy Roman Church, can dispose freely of all ecclesiastical benefices. I know also that whoever abuses this power builds for the fire of hell."[2] But the Pope had made himself a temporal sovereign, just like any other; he was engaged in his wicked and disastrous struggle with Frederic II.,[3] and, by fair means or by foul, money must be had. Grosseteste sorrowfully acknowledged the necessity, while his soul revolted against the means.[4] But at last the attempt of Innocent IV. to force his nephew, Frederic of Louvain, into a canonry at Lincoln, goaded this wise and cautious prelate to despair. He told the Pope that such a prostitution of the pastoral office was the sin of Antichrist, "therefore I . . . in all filial duty and obedience, do contradict, rebel, and refuse to obey."[5] The Pope was almost frantic with rage. "Who,"

[1] On this point Grosseteste was in direct opposition to the archbishop, Edmund Rich; see Hook, iii. p. 203, and *Ep.* xxvii., xxviii., lxxii. Dr. Hook rather sympathises with Rich. Bishop Stubbs also (*Const. Hist.* vol. i. chap. xiii.) thinks that what the Church lost by the secular employment of the clergy the State gained, "being administered by statesmen whose first ideas of order were based on conscience and law rather than on brute force." But this does not meet the point. The king ought to have paid his own servants out of his own purse.

[2] *Ep.* xlix.

[3] See Creighton, *Hist. of the Papacy*, i. 25, 26.

[4] *Ep.* cxix. Luard, p. lxv. In 1251 Grosseteste caused a calculation to be made of the revenues of the foreigners in England. They amounted to more than 70,000 marks, three times as much as the revenue of the king; Luard, p. lxxviii.

[5] *Ep.* cxxviii.

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he exclaimed, "is this deaf old fool who presumes to judge my actions?" He would have excommunicated Grosseteste, had not his cardinals warned him of the danger of proceeding to this extremity against the greatest bishop of the age.

With the king also, the ill-starred Henry III., Grosseteste's relations ended in disaster. On this side also his position was full of difficulties. He objected vehemently, as we have seen, to the intrusion of the king's clerks into spiritual offices, and in this he was no doubt right. He maintained also in its fullest extent the claim of the clergy to exemption from secular jurisdiction. He reads no warning in the story of Becket. Whether he was right in this point is, if we consider the circumstances of the time, an open question. But here also, as in his dealings with the Pope, the inefficiency of the sovereign finally pushed him to the verge of rebellion, and he turned in despair to Simon of Montfort. Let me give you here the words of the old chronicler, Rishanger,[1] about the great Earl of Leicester. "He was stedfast to his word, grave in countenance, especially trustworthy and respectful towards churchmen. Endeavouring to follow the blessed Robert Grethead, Bishop of Lincoln, he committed to him the education of his children. By his advice he dealt with

[1] I take this quotation from Blaauw, *Barons' War*, p. 290. For the rest of this paragraph it is sufficient to refer to Luard.

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difficulties, and attempted and accomplished what he undertook. It is said indeed that the great enterprise, for which he strove unto death, was imposed on him for the remission of his sins by the injunction of the bishop, who declared that the peace of the English Church could not be secured without the sword, and that all who died for it should be crowned with martyrdom. The bishop is also said to have foreseen the deaths of the father and of the son on the same day, and to have assured young Henry, laying his hand upon his head, that they should die in the cause of truth and justice." There is a story of a young man, who, having fallen asleep before Grosseteste's tomb on the eve of the battle of Evesham, was told in a vision that the holy bishop had gone to that fatal field, to comfort de Montfort in his last agony. Grosseteste had died in 1253, twelve years before the battle. He died as he had lived, protesting with his last breath against all heresy, against the rapacity of the Pope, against the enforced degradation of his beloved friars, who were sent to extract money from dying men under false and hypocritical pretences, and rising into a strain of prophecy as he foretold the evils to come. Bells were heard tolling in the sky during the night of his death, and soon there arose a bruit of miracles performed at his tomb. Innocent IV. is said to have received the news of his death with undisguised joy,

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and even to have thought of ordering his bones to be cast out of the church. But the English people regarded Grosseteste as a saint, though he was never formally canonised for reasons which are sufficiently obvious.

The character of this illustrious man has been perhaps sufficiently illustrated in the imperfect sketch which is all that time allows me to draw. He was a great creature, and is a great example in all that concerns the Christian life. But there remains the question how far he succeeded, and how far it was possible for him to succeed, in the task to which he devoted his life with heroic singleness of purpose.

He never permitted himself openly to question the system of the mediæval Roman Church, and acted resolutely throughout his life on the presumption that it was a good system, if the rulers of Church and State would do their part. Yet it must be noticed that he was on intimate terms with the Franciscans, amongst whom visions and prophecies of the most revolutionary kind were afloat. On one occasion Adam Marsh sends him a book of Abbot Joachim of Flora, desiring him to read it in his bedroom, copy and return it. Abbot Joachim, who died in 1202, had caught up, possibly from Origen, the idea of the Eternal Gospel, the same idea which in a later age gave birth to Quakerism. The wickedness of the times, and specially the corruption of the

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Church, seemed to this prophet to be the darkness before the dawn of a new age, the kingdom of the Holy Ghost, in which the hierarchy and the existing system of the Church would disappear altogether. This was among the books that Grosseteste had read, and his great friend Adam Marsh recommends it as containing a genuine outpouring of the prophetic spirit.[1] But whatever doubts may have crossed the bishop's mind, he suppressed them, and bent himself wholly to the task of making the best of things as he found them. Unfortunately the system broke in his hands. In his ultramontane view the Pope was the head of the whole world, all temporal powers and potentates being set under the feet of the Vicar of Christ. It was necessary then that he should be absolutely pure and spiritual. But what Grosseteste saw in the chair of St. Peter was a warrior prince launching armies against a temporal rival, and using his religious authority to blast with interdicts those whom he could not slay with lance or bow. This new and amazing degradation of

[1] Marsh, *Ep.* xliii. (in *Mon. Franc.* p. 146). Marsh speaks here in the strongest terms of the wickedness of the times, for which "prelates and clergy, princes and people" were equally to blame. On Joachim of Flora, see Milman, v. 254; Rashdall, i. 382, ii. 738. Origen borrowed from the Apocalypse the phrase Eternal Gospel, but in his view because it is eternal it is not earthly. It is the law of the Church in Heaven, where there are no "shadows," that is to say, no forms or ceremonies, no priesthood or sacraments. Joachim believed that this Eternal Gospel was shortly to be realised upon earth. George Fox found in his English Bible not Eternal but Everlasting Gospel, and inferred that this formless religion always had been and always ought to be practised by the true people of God.

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the spiritual power filled devout minds with horror. Many regarded it as the sign of Antichrist.

In the next century we shall find Wycliffe asking whether a soldier Pope was not the natural fruit of the papal system, whether there was not something in the axioms of the Roman Church which led inevitably to this shocking anomaly. Grosseteste had not yet formulated this question. Possibly he would never have done so. He would have looked for a remedy, we may think, to a General Council like those of the fifteenth century. But what a tragedy is his life. Few men have been greater than he; few have been more devoted to the highest standard of duty. He gave himself up, under God, to the service of Pope and King, and he died a rebel against both.

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V

WYCLIFFE

One of the most notable events of the fourteenth century was the removal of the papacy from Rome to Avignon. It lasted from 1305 to 1378, and was followed by the Great Schism, from 1378 to 1414, during which there were two rival popes, one at Rome, the other at Avignon.

Avignon was in France though not of it. The city belonged to the King of Naples, who was also Count of Provence. The choice of this place of exile was determined by the struggle between Philip IV. of France and Boniface VIII., and this struggle was the direct result of the new temporal sovereignty of the Pope. Crushed between two formidable rivals, the Emperor and the King of France, the Pope put himself under the protection of the latter, and by this act became the bishop in the French political game of chess.

Another leading fact is the French War begun by Edward III. in 1337. It produced the brilliant but barren victories of Crecy and Poitiers by land and of Sluys by sea, some transient conquests, many

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ransoms, and a dazzling harvest of glory, but ended, as was inevitable, and indeed right, in disaster. It shocked the conscience of the best men as a flagrant instance of war pursued for unjust ends. But it had also another serious consequence. The popes were Frenchmen, settled in France, drawing from England more money than the king, and spending the money, partly on the pleasures and magnificence of "the sinful city of Avenon," partly in support of the king's enemies. Hence the irritation of the last century against papal exactions and provisions was very bitterly intensified; hence again the nobles, accustomed to the high-handed methods of war, and not knowing where to find pay for their regiments of soldiers, began to cast covetous eyes on the lands of the Church.

The third leading fact is the great plague known as the Black Death, which raged with great fury in 1349, 1362, 1369, and 1376, and swept away from a third to a half of the population of the country. It produced extraordinary results, of which no doubt you have heard enough. It shook the feudal system from top to bottom, changing the lord into a landlord and the serf into a free labourer, though the process was not completed till the time of the Tudors. But, like all great pestilences, it had strongly marked effects in the spiritual region also. Priests abandoned their depopulated parishes; there was much infidelity

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and much intemperance, as we can read in *Piers Plowman*. But the same book shows us how, in face of this great calamity, men turned their thoughts with increased seriousness to repentance, amendment, and deeper views of Christian duty. It is by no means an accident that the Bible was translated into English during the ravages of the Black Death. It was amongst those who owed their freedom to the plague that Lollardism found acceptance.

We may count as a fourth significant fact the sudden outbreak of a national English literature in the prose of Wycliffe and Mandeville, and in the poetry of Chaucer, Gower, and Langland. In the works of these writers the rude English speech, breathed upon by the kindly influence of French and Italian art, becomes a fitting organ of æsthetic expression. The divided nation has become one, has found its voice, and is able to utter its thoughts. Thus, more especially by the help of the triad of poets, we are able to reproduce the movement, the colour, the sentiments of that vanished time with great minuteness and fidelity.

Two of these poets were rich, one was poor. I must not linger upon the delightful Chaucer. You must have read, what everybody ought to read, his Canterbury Tales, and you will remember the loving hand with which he draws the portraits of the Knight and Squire, of the poor Parson of a town and of the

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poor Oxford Scholar; how he laughs, not without a touch of malice, at the Monk and Friar, how heartily he detests the Archdeacon's officials and the Pardoner. Chaucer was a favourite, indeed a kind of relation, of John of Gaunt, and wrote primarily for the amusement of the profligate nobility, who looked to that unprincipled prince as their leader. He is always charming, musical, tender, most amusing, kindly, and shrewd, but I am afraid it must be added that he is seldom serious and often gross. Something of Froissart he has, something of the troubadour, something of Shakespeare. But for our purpose he is of interest partly as showing the tone of the Lancastrian circle, partly as confirming, as far as he goes, what we gather from more seriously minded men. One such we might find in Gower,[1] "moral Gower" as Chaucer calls him, with a touch of his delicate malice. But let us go rather to the man of the people and the *Visions of Piers Plowman.*

William Langland was the son of a tenant-farmer, bred to the Church, probably in the abbey of Great Malvern, and fairly educated. Whether he was in

[1] Gower's general view of the evils of his time is that of Langland and Wycliffe. In the *Vox Clamantis* he draws much the same picture as *Piers Plowman;* the root of all the mischief is the claim of the Pope to temporal power, and the bloodshed occasioned thereby. There are many signs that Antichrist has come. In the *Confessio Amantis* the cause of the decadence is that Love has fled—"Into the swerd the cherche keie Is torned and the holy bede Into cursinge." Therefore he will sing of Love; and this he proceeds to do in a series of tales, some of which are by no means edifying. This will explain Chaucer's fling at "moral Gower."

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orders in the strict sense of the word is doubtful, for he was married. We see him most distinctly hanging about London and gaining his living as a notary. He was a tall, gaunt man, known as Long Will, with a saturnine temper, a kindly heart, and a tender conscience. An educated peasant who had missed the way of promotion; loth to reverence lords, ladies, or serjeants-at-law—that is to say, the very people who could have helped him; ruggedly independent, melancholy, and a little soured, but full of rough sympathy and strictly just, without envy and without hatred. It is not an unusual English type. Taine, who is always philosophical, traces its prevalence to the rainfall of our country.

Langland knew the people well. He had lived amongst them in the hovel, the alehouse, the harvest field, the back streets of towns, with such occasional glimpses of people in silks and furs as might fall to the lot of a poor man. But he had a real poetic gift, and wrote his observations on life in the form of the Visions of a Ploughman. It is characteristic that he chose as his vehicle the rude old English metre, which depends on alliteration and rhythm, and scorned the new-fangled allurements of French or Italian rhyme.

He falls asleep on the Malvern Hills, and dreams a dream, suggested perhaps by that charming prospect, in which, across the deep channel of the Severn,

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one sees the level orchard country with the Cotswolds in the distance. He beholds a tower on a toft, or hill, towards the east, a dungeon in a deep vale towards the west, and, between the two, a fair field full of folk, swinking and labouring, while gluttons waste and destroy the fruits of their labour. It is a picture of the world between heaven and hell, drawn, as Taine says, and this time we may certainly go with the great French critic, in the spirit of Albrecht Dürer. It is the picture with which Socialism begins, and, as we spell our way through the crabbed old English, this is the goal which we expect to reach. Everything is out of joint, and all the colours are dark. The king is like a cat among the mice. Nobles and knights are violent and oppressive. Tradesmen are dishonest. Labourers are drunken, idle, and improvident, and, since the Great Plague, are inclined to rebel against their masters and strike for higher wages. As for the Church, the secular clergy are not good, the monks are worse, the friars worse still, and the bishops' officials worst of all.

Well, what is the remedy? Now, attend to the utterance of the English peasant, who with all his violence of speech is guided nearly always by an inborn love of justice and moderation. Three things, says Langland, are needful to the body—clothes, meat, and drink, and three to the soul—Do-well, Do-better, and Do-best. Kings should rule in

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righteousness; knights should protect the Church and the labourer, and then they may hunt and hawk as much as they please. Labourers should be honest and sober. Priests should preach the Gospel and live by what they preach. Reason and Love should rule all. "Loveth all as brethren. And who that most maistries can, be mildest of bearing. And crowneth Conscience king." This is the message of Piers Plowman, whose figure seems to melt away finally in that of the Saviour.

So there is to be no revolution after all. Every one is to obey the Golden Rule, and then things will go well. This is as far as Langland had advanced at the time when he published his first edition in 1362. This was a year before the Jubilee, at which King Edward feasted three captive or suppliant kings at his Round Table in Windsor Castle. Ten years later, when the second edition came out, the glory had changed into disaster, the king had fallen into the power of the impudent Alice Perrers, and Langland's thoughts were darker and fiercer. The times seem to show that Antichrist has come; this thought, as we have seen, was not far from the mind of Grosseteste in the preceding century. The Pope is fixed upon as the cause of all the evils of the time through his greed and ambition: "God amend the Pope that pilleth holy kirk and climbeth before the king; and fynt folk to fight and Christian

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blood to spill." The Church herself is corrupted by wealth. "Take her lands, ye lords, and let her live by dimes." Finally the Plowman breaks out into his singular prophecy of Henry VIII.: "And there shall come a king and confess you religious; and bete you as the Bible telleth, for breaking of your rule. And then shall the abbot of Abingdon and all his issue for ever have a knock of a king and incurable the wound."[1] The king shall abolish the monks and friars, and give the lands of the Church to the nobles. In these lines we may probably trace the influence of the teaching of Wycliffe upon the imagination of Langland. But he does not say a word about Communism, and it is plain, from the way in which he speaks of the greed of labourers and their demand for higher wages, that he would not be in the least sympathy with the Peasants' Rising. He would have gone heartily with King Henry VIII., and doubtless many others were in the same frame of mind.

From this sombre poet we can form a clear picture of the evils of the time as they appeared to

[1] This remarkable prophecy was published in the fourteenth century, and fulfilled literally in the sixteenth. It is not less striking than Savonarola's prediction of the sack of Rome. Some readers may remember the use made of the latter in the *Philology of the Gospels* by Professor Blass. The Gospel of St. Luke has been dated rather late, partly on the ground that the prophecy of the capture of Jerusalem therein contained must have been written *post eventum*. Professor Blass points out that in a work of Savonarola (and we may add here also in *Piers Plowman*) are to be found prophecies even more detailed, which were undoubtedly published *ante eventum*.

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a serious and intelligent man of the people. The nation was burdened by a costly, disastrous, and unnecessary war. The king, since the death of Queen Philippa, had been ruled by a courtesan. The tone of morality, especially among the great, was deplorably low. The parochial clergy were generally underpaid, ignorant, and imperfectly supervised, owing to the non-residence of their superiors. Non-residence was one of the most serious causes of complaint: it was partly due to the Pope, who thrust foreigners into the best pieces of preferment; partly to the monasteries, which came into possession of advowsons and supplied cheap vicars to do the duty; partly to the king, who used the patrimony of the Church as a means of paying his civil servants. Monks and friars were commonly regarded as idle, useless, and vicious. The friars in particular had hardly any friends, though Richard de Bury still speaks a good word for them.[1] The secular clergy disliked them, because they intruded into the parish, intercepted the alms of the devout, and gave abso-

[1] In the *Philobiblion*, chapters vi. and viii., Bury deplores the deterioration of the friars, which he traces to "triplex cura superflua, ventris videlicet vestium et domorum." It is to be seen in their preaching, which had become unscriptural, unlearned, theatrical, and conventional, and also in their neglect of the teaching of the young. He calls them back to the example of their founders, for whom he cherished a warm admiration. But he highly praises the preachers and minors for their love of books and learning. They had entered the vineyard at the eleventh hour, yet had done more for the study of Scripture than all the other labourers. He knew them well, kept them about his own person, and employed them to collect books for his library in France, Germany, and Italy.

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lution too easily; the monks or "possessioners," because they preached poverty; the laity because they lay in wait at the death-bed, and because their wandering mendicant life was supposed to have drawn them into great moral depravity. The Bishops' Court was the object of universal detestation. It sent out paid spies to pry into the secrets of households, and it had two rules—the poor man was obliged to do open penance, while the rich could compound in money. Another heavy complaint was the exemption of the clergy from the jurisdiction of the secular courts. Clergy was a very wide term. Any one who could translate the neck-verse[1]—a well-known verse of a Latin psalm—could claim to be judged by the canon law, which did not allow the penalties of death or mutilation. In the large towns especially there were shoals of so-called clerks, who thus escaped punishment for the most atrocious crimes, and this mischief was further aggravated by the privilege of sanctuary, which provided a ready means of escape for the murderer or fraudulent debtor. Finally, among all these disorders, we discern a rising spirit of scepticism. The educated man has begun to laugh at relics, miracles, and pardons, and the people are reading the Bible in English.

[1] The neck-verse was Ps. xv. 5 (Vulg.). See *Piers Plowman*, Text B, ed. Skeat, p. 203: "*Dominus pars hereditatis mee* is a meri verset That has take fro tybourne twenti stronge theues."

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It is evident that changes are on the way. They are called for by different kinds of people, by the greedy and vicious, and by the serious and reflecting, by proud nobles, and by oppressed peasants. The question arises, as in all such times of unrest, whether the evil is due to religion itself, or to what we may call the machinery and outward expression of religion; whether the exact cause of the sickness has been diagnosed and the right remedy ascertained; again whether the remedy can be applied without aggravating the disorder. These are the considerations which must guide us in our judgment of John Wycliffe.[1]

This famous man was born about 1324, of a family of some consequence, at Hipswell, near Richmond, in Yorkshire. About 1356 he appears to have been Fellow of Merton College here in Oxford. In 1361 he was Master of Balliol, and from 1363–80 Warden of Canterbury Hall, which is now incorporated with Christ Church. He was also rector in succession of the parishes of Fylingham in Lincolnshire, Ludgershall in Bucks, and Lutterworth in Leicestershire. From 1363 to 1380 he occupied rooms in Queen's

[1] See his printed works, published for the Wyclif Society, especially the admirable editions of the *De Civili Dominio* (Book i.), and the *De Dominio Divino*, by R. L. Poole. Dr. Shirley's edition of the *Fasciculi Zizaniorum* (Rolls Series) is another masterly piece of work. Arnold's *Select English Works of John Wyclif* is most useful. Mr. Trevelyan's *England in the Age of Wycliffe* will be found brilliant and instructive; also Mr. Capes' *History of the English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries.*

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College. In these chambers he appears to have made his home, visiting his parish probably in vacation, till his expulsion from Oxford in 1382, when he retired to spend the last two or three years of his life at Lutterworth. He left behind him voluminous writings in scholastic Latin, crabbed, harsh, and intricate to the last degree. We have also a number of sermons and treatises in English, many of them unfortunately of uncertain authorship. But in all the mass of his compositions there is not a single letter. If he had friends, at any rate there is no friendly correspondence. We know his mind, but hardly his personality. Even on the few occasions when he emerges into the light of history, we read the name but do not see the man. He was a college Don, the most famous teacher of his time in Oxford, a considerable thinker,[1] though not of the first rank. His philosophy is not original, and he appeals invariably to the head; there is no sentiment or pathos or unction about him; not a grain of amusement is to be extracted from his books, and we may reckon this as a serious defect; not a grain of poetry, and this is more serious still. He had none of the qualities of a great preacher or a great leader of the people, and, so far as we can see, he never attempted to be either one or the other. What we observe in him is the courage with which

[1] "Duns Scotus, Ockham, Bradwardine, and Wyclif were the four great schoolmen of the fourteenth century"; Shirley, *Fasc. Zix.* li. All four were English, but the last two are hardly to be compared to the first two.

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he applied the theories of others to the circumstances of his time; an intense devotion to the Bible, in which he found the one sufficient rule of faith and practice; a keen sense of the disorders of society, and a burning love of justice. He is a very singular figure—this dry and unsociable recluse, full of smouldering fire, able to stir men's minds to the very bottom, but quite devoid of the graces which touch the heart or kindle the imagination.

In 1366 Pope Urban V. demanded payment of the tribute promised by King John. The demand was peremptorily refused, and Wycliffe defended the action of Parliament in the Oxford schools. At this time he was one of the royal chaplains, supported, as his Carmelite opponent says, "by the house of Herod." It would appear that his opinions had already introduced him to the favourable notice of the court, and five years later the bond was drawn closer. In 1371 a series of disasters in the French war led to the dismissal of Bishop Wykeham, the transference of power to the great feudal nobles, whose chieftain was John of Gaunt, and the imposition of unusually heavy taxation upon the Church; and Wycliffe was again employed to defend these measures. Thus he was brought into a close and unfortunate alliance with the Duke of Lancaster. Gaunt was a restless, unprincipled, and incompetent man, suspected of designs upon the throne, and surrounded by a gang of knaves

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who plundered the State in most outrageous fashion and shared their booty with their great patron.[1] Wycliffe's own character was above suspicion; but it was a cruel fatality which led this austere enthusiast to cast in his lot with a crew of buccaneers. There have been many strange alliances in politics, and this is one of the strangest.

Wycliffe no doubt expected to get something out of his uncongenial associates, and what he desired we can understand if we turn to his theory of Church and State. It is known as the Dominion of Grace. It was not his own theory: he adopted it bodily from Fitz-Ralph,[2] Archbishop of Armagh. But he drew from it applications never contemplated by the author. Let us try to see the principles and consequences of this remarkable doctrine.

It is built, not upon the love, but upon the power of God.[3] God is absolute Lord, because He is Creator. Not absolute only, but immediate; there is no other

[1] See Trevelyan.

[2] Fitz-Ralph's treatise, *De Pauperie Salvatoris*, will be found at the end of Mr. Poole's edition of the *De Dominio Divino*. See also the preface.

[3] *Select English Works*, iii. p. 75 *sqq*. "This God hath power to knowe himsilf and to willen himsilf. This power is the first persoone, this wisdom is the seconde persoone, and this wille is the thridde persoone; and all thes thre ben o God." Not a word here about Love. Contrast Aug. *De Trin.* ix. 12. "Thou seest the Trinity, if thou seest Love;" also what was said above about the philosophy of Grosseteste. Wycliffe, of course, speaks of Love upon occasion (see, for instance, the Whitsunday sermon, *Select English Works*, vol. i. p. 155), but always in a rather perfunctory fashion. All that he really required was power on the one side and obedience on the other. And the obedience is blind. See the *Three Nests* in *Fasc. Zis.*, p. 454, where he teaches that we know what God does but not why He does it.

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lord between us and Him. He can never part with His lordship; He lends but never gives. Lord and king are words that vary in meaning with the times; to Fitz-Ralph and Wycliffe they would be coloured by the associations of feudalism. God divides His earthly lordship among men in the shape of fiefs, great or small. No fief belongs to the possessor; it is held under the king, on certain conditions of feudal service, and will be taken back by the king, if those services are not loyally performed. But so long as the vassal remains in the right attitude towards his lord, he is allowed to retain what his lord has lent him. Now, as regards God, the right attitude is the state of grace. It follows that no man, whether king or peasant, can be said to own anything at all, and that whatever he has can be taken away from him, if he falls from grace.

Fitz-Ralph was arguing against the Mendicant Friars. The friars were bound by their vows to absolute poverty, and it might be maintained with justice that it was a fall from grace, if they attempted to accumulate property under any pretence. But Wycliffe went much further. All the evils of religion, he thought, could be accounted for by the wealth of the Church. The remedy was that, not the monks only, but the secular clergy also should be stripped of all landed property by the temporal lords, and nothing left except the tithes. Even the tithes were to be

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regarded as pure alms, which any man might withhold if he judged the priest unworthy. It was in fact the "Short and Easy Way of removing hirelings from the Church," which John Milton advocated.

There is much to be said in favour of the Dominion of Grace. All power comes from God, and may be taken away if it is systematically abused. The same thing is true in the abstract of all property. In the Church, in the State, the welfare of the body is the supreme consideration, and it is true that we are but stewards of all that we think we possess. But, if the theory is to be practically applied, it has very formidable consequences. Just consider. Earlier scholastic writers had even ventured to discuss the lawfulness of tyrannicide, and Anselm, St. Hugh, and Grosseteste had not shrunk from speaking very plainly to their royal masters. Wycliffe would have been justified in using language of strong but respectful remonstrance to Edward III. or Richard II. But he never does so. It was necessary for his purposes that the king should be head, both of Church and State, and he will not go beyond saying that in extreme cases passive resistance might be justified. Again, one great evil of the time was the power of the feudal lords. Each of these great men had an army of trained soldiers in his service, and the barons were a source of great peril to the national welfare until they nearly exterminated one another in the Wars of the Roses.

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Wycliffe proposed greatly to increase their already too great power by giving, not to the king, but to them the lands of the Church. We can well understand that John of Gaunt eagerly welcomed so comfortable a doctrine, and made all the use he could of its apostle. Again Wycliffe knew that the degradation of the friars was largely due to their mendicancy, yet he aimed at purifying the Church by turning the whole body of the clergy into mendicants. It is evident that he applied his theory of Dominion in a one-sided and passionate way.

But it was on the spiritual side that the Dominion of Grace led to the most remarkable and enduring consequences. Like every one else, the Pope was a vassal of God; his fief was purely spiritual, not temporal, and was held upon tenure of faithful service. It followed that a bad Pope was not to be obeyed, and that the papacy itself might be abolished, if its powers were habitually abused. The clergy again were vassals with a strictly limited commission; they did not give God's grace but declared it. Wycliffe did not deny that a bad priest could administer the sacraments, just as a bad judge could still do justice in the king's name;[1] what he maintained was that in the religious sphere all binding and loosing were the acts of God Himself, and that all

[1] See *De Civili Dominio*, ii. 9. In his *Confessio*, *Fasc. Zis.* p. 116, he denies that a faithless priest can consecrate the Eucharist. But this did not injure the faithful recipient.

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wrongful excommunications or absolutions were null and void. Where, then, was authority to be found? In the church-nation. All spiritual power is committed to the body as church; all coercive jurisdiction belongs to it as nation. The head upon earth of this body is the king, whose duty it is to see that every member, whether clerk or layman, does his duty. But as a spiritual being, every member of the body holds direct from God, the sovereign Lord, and must guide himself by the will of God expressed in Holy Scripture. It will be understood that Wycliffe held auricular confession to be needless where there is contrition of heart. But he did not shrink from a still more daring assertion. Scripture, philosophy, and history told him that the doctrine of Transubstantiation was no part of God's commission to the Church, and he denounced it accordingly. What he held himself is not very clear; it may have been that belief which we associate with the name of Luther, or again it may have been the view of Hooker.[1]

It is plain how this teaching strikes at the whole

[1] It is sometimes said that Wycliffe did not declare against the Lateran definition till 1381, but this is not correct. His teaching was uniform from first to last, and is to be found complete in outline in the *Logica*, iii. 10. His main reason is that form is "educta de potentia materiæ," and is an accidental disposition of the essence or nature. Hence a body of one species cannot be changed into another, *Three Nests*, *Fasc. Ziz.* p. 454. Also that God Himself cannot annihilate any substance, *Fasc. Ziz.* lvii. The final expression of his view on the sacrament will be found in his *Confessio*, *Fasc. Ziz.* p. 115. In view of what he says on pp. 116, 117, it is difficult to think that he held the Lutheran view. It is, indeed, not easy to interpret him, for he purposely retained the

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system of the mediæval Latin Church. But the storm round Wycliffe's head was slow in gathering, and did not burst till Edward III. was laid with his fathers, and Richard II. reigned in his place. I must not dwell on the abortive trials of 1377 and 1378. You may read the tale in Mr. Trevelyan's fine narrative, and see how Wycliffe was protected by Gaunt, by the Queen-Mother, by the University of Oxford, and by the London apprentices. Not till after the Peasants' Rising did he find himself in serious danger. Only to a very limited extent could he be held responsible for that dreadful rebellion. He had praised Communism,[1] but St. Anselm and many of the monastic writers had also taught the same thing, that if there were no sin in the world all God's gifts would belong to all. He had spoken of the common descent from Adam as the noblest of all pedigrees, and expressed his dislike of all forms of slavery. It is true also that John Balle, the hot-headed priest, who was one of the leaders, was his disciple. But Wycliffe himself was on the side of

official phraseology as far as he could (*Logica*, iii. 10, p. 136, "we must speak with the many and think with the few;" or again "it is not worth while to scandalise the whole Church of Rome," *Fasc. Zis.* p. 119). The Body is in the Bread "non aliter quam in signo; est tamen ibi aliter quam ut in signo," *Fasc. Zis.* p. 118. There are "gradus in signis," p. 122. Throughout the *Confessio* he speaks of his opponents as "cultores signorum."

[1] Provisionally, as the state of things that would prevail if man had never fallen; see *Select English Works*, iii. p. 127; Mr. Poole's preface to the *De Civili Dominio*, p. xxiv. Anselm's doctrine was the same; see Eadmer's *Life* (Rolls Series), p. 342.

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the lords, and the rebels were not communists.[1] What they demanded was lower rents, higher wages, and emancipation. Nevertheless the Rising did Wycliffe great harm; it might be regarded as a not unnatural result of the principles which he had inculcated. The great lords who had rapturously embraced his teaching so far as it promised them possession of the Church lands were amazed to find that the Dominion of Grace had a double edge; and few ventured to follow the reformer in his view of the sacrament.

Wycliffe's tenets were condemned at the Council of Blackfriars in 1382, though his name was not mentioned. Courtenay, who was now archbishop, had the blood of Sudbury to avenge, and was determined not to be baulked again. Gaunt ordered Wycliffe to be silent, and seems to have abandoned him to his fate. Only Oxford stood by him. Rygge, the chancellor, and the two proctors, Walter Dash and John Huntman, did what they could to screen him. But the king, the pope, the archbishop, and the friars were all banded against him. Wycliffe was driven from the University, and Oxford lost its freedom of thought.

[1] Indeed Communism is the antipodes of Democracy. Plato's Commune was to be governed by an autocratic oligarchy, and the peculiar marriage arrangements, which were essential to its working, could only be secured by force. Monasticism, again, was found to be impracticable without the monarchical power of the abbot. What we call Socialism now appears to be merely the right of the poor to surtax the rich. This is Democracy, but not Socialism.

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Wycliffe retired to Lutterworth, and seems to have lived there in the quiet performance of his duties, rarely if ever moving beyond the limits of the parish. We long for some record of his thoughts and doings during this melancholy time of isolation and failing health. To these two or three years are generally ascribed his translation of the Bible into English, and his creation of the order of Simple Priests, but it is doubtful whether either of these works really belongs to him. That he loved the Bible, that he ardently desired that all men should read the Bible in their native tongue, that there was an English Bible in his lifetime, there is no doubt whatever. But he nowhere claims to have made the translation which is commonly regarded as his; he nowhere appears to use it, and some translation seems to have been in general use some years before. Thus we read in the first text of *Piers Plowman* (published in 1362) that Do-bet, among other good works, "hath rendret the Bible and precheth the peple seint poules wordes."[1] Nor again are we to

[1] See Skeat's edition, p. 107. Mr. Skeat thinks that Text A was written in 1362–3. In a sermon which Mr. Arnold regarded as Wycliffe's (*Select English Works*, i. p. 209), one great Bishop of England is displeased that God's law should be written in English, "and he pursueth a preest, for he writith to men this Englishe . . . but oo comfort is of knyghttis, that thei savoren myche the gospel, and han wille to rede in Englishe the gospel of Cristis liif." Not only the Epistles of St. Paul, then, but the Gospels had been translated, but Wycliffe does not name "the preest." He gives the English of many, sometimes of long passages, in his sermons, but appears to have rendered the Vulgate in his own way, and not to have used either of the two so-called Wycliffite versions. Richard de Bury (*Philob.* vi.) seems to speak of vernacular translations of Scripture. Sir

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regard Wycliffe as forestalling John Wesley in the organisation of a regular body of itinerant preachers. There were Lollard preachers even during his lifetime. Some of them, such as Aston, Herford, Balle,[1] Purvey, were disciples or personal friends. Others, again, like Swynderby, Pateshull, and probably Brute, were not, so far as appears, in any personal relation with Wycliffe. What they preached was indeed Wycliffe's doctrine, and a little later on there appears to have grown up a sort of organisation among them. But at first they appear rather as independent volunteers, some doubtless known to Wycliffe, and all animated by the same spirit, but with no definite instructions or commission.

The most interesting record of Wycliffe's later

Thomas More (*Dyalogues*, p. 138, ed. 1530) had seen "fair old Bibles" that had been translated before Wycliffe's time. A Council at Oxford in 1408 prohibited vernacular translations such as had recently been made "in the time of John Wycliff or since," but does not say that they were by Wycliffe. See Wilkins, iii. 317. Nor does Arundel, Wilkins, iii. 350. See Gasquet, *Old English Bible*, and on the other hand Capes, p. 124 *sqq.*; Westcott, *History of the English Bible*. It seems clear that the Bible in whole or in considerable part had been turned into English before Wycliffe's time, and to this extent Dr. Gasquet appears to be right. But the evidence all goes to show that the translation was the work, not of the conservatives, but of those who were looking in the same direction as Langland and Wycliffe.

[1] See the Confession of John Balle in *Fasc. Zis.* p. 273. He said that he had been a disciple of Wycliffe's for two years. Also that there was a "comitiva de secta et doctrina Wycclyff qui conspiraverant quandam confœderationem, et se ordinaverant circuire totam Angliam prædicando prædicti Wycclyf materias quas docuerat." He does not assert that they were sent forth by Wycliffe. So also Courtenay's Epistle to Stokes, *Fasc. Zis.* p. 275: "Unlicensed preachers have been spreading heresy through our province"; but he does not mention Wycliffe's name. See Trevelyan upon this point; on the other hand, Dr. Shirley, Introduction to the *Fasc. Zis.* p. xl.

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years is to be found in his English tracts and sermons. The former were intended to be scattered broadcast, so far as might be in the days before printing. The sermons were short, severe expositions of doctrine and practice, preached, we may suppose, in Lutterworth church, beneath the stern fresco of the Last Judgment, and breathing throughout the spirit of that awe-inspiring picture.

In 1384 there arrived at Lutterworth rectory the mandate of Urban citing Wycliffe to Rome to answer for his belief. We have his answer. "I suppose," he wrote, "that the Roman Pontiff, since he is Christ's supreme Vicar on earth, is bound beyond all others to keep Christ's Law." . . . "I infer from the Gospel that the Pope ought to leave to the secular arm all temporal dominion, and exhort his clergy to do the same." He adds that his health will not permit him to obey the citation. In the December he was stricken with paralysis while officiating in his church, and on the last day of the year he died. Some half-century later his bones were dug up and cast into the stream that runs below the village, as the ashes of the Lyons martyrs were cast into the Rhone, to float down into the sea, and so all over the world.

Now, what are we to say of Wycliffe? It is not easy to strike the balance justly, in the case of a man whose name has been the sport of excited

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partisans, execrated by one side, idolised by the other. Further, it is more than five centuries since he passed from earth, and, as I have said, we do not really know the man. There are no anecdotes, no letters, no spoken words, no description of his looks and bearing. For us he is his books and nothing more.

We may say that he was essentially a religious thinker, not a preacher and not an organiser. We may say again that in this department he was remarkable but not eminent. The great doctrine with which his name is associated, that of the Dominion of Grace, is not his; he takes it bodily from Fitz-Ralph, and it came to Fitz-Ralph from Origen, Cyprian, and many others. Only the practical conclusions are Wycliffe's, and he has drawn them with great courage and insight, but not without passion. I think we must also say that he has no tincture of the humanities. Art, poetry, music, do not exist for him, they do not soften his dry, logical mind, nor do they colour his view of the world. He has no tenderness. In the midst of a Quinquagesima sermon on Love, he bursts into fierce invectives against the friars, and tells us that they ought to be burnt alive. Already we find this eminent man shut up in what Matthew Arnold called the "dungeon of puritanism," as bitter, as narrow, as fierce as the worst of his opponents. But he was hardly used; we may make that excuse.

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We shall see in him, again, the first great instance of the alliance of religion with partisan politics. No Church can say to any party leader, "Help me to my objects and I will help you to yours." John Wycliffe made a bargain with John of Gaunt. He chose, perhaps he was driven to choose, the wrong side; but in such matters there is no right side.

But he loved the Bible,[1] and he hated iniquity. He turned aside from mechanism to the Free Spirit, and from a corrupted tradition to the pure fountain-head, and he exhorted others to do the same. He recognised to their full extent the claims of reason and of duty; and we may forgive him his aridity—for reason, if it is dry, is equitable. The courage which he displayed, if we consider the forces arrayed against him, was extraordinary, and his intellectual moderation and good sense are hardly less so. It would not have been surprising if he had fallen into great extravagances, religious and political. But we may say that his beliefs are in the main those of the great majority of Englishmen to-day, and this

[1] Two passages will help to show the way in which he used his Bible; both are taken from the *Select English Works*. The first reference is i. 152. He held the Double Procession, but he held also that the doctrine is not expressly revealed, and should therefore be held only as a pious opinion, not "charged upon the Church." He would not have excommunicated the Greeks. The other is iii. 72: "And God forbid that men believe that each man that shall be saved must trow expressly each word that here (in the Athanasian Creed) is said; for few or none be in that state, either Greeks or Latins." (I have modernised the text here.)

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is a high proof of the justice, the clearness, and the sincerity of his thoughts.

Yet even here there is a caution to be given. Wycliffe brought out with amazing force one side of the religious life, the immediacy and directness of the soul's relation to God. "My soul and God"—a great German scholar has lately resolved religion into that one relation. But there is a third term which we must not neglect. "My soul, my brother's soul, and God;" let us take that rather for our formula. The Spirit comes to us from heaven, as Wycliffe taught, but He also comes to us through others. It is this "through others" that Wycliffe does not adequately recognise. He does not omit it, but he fails to account for it, or to provide it with a reason.

His Church is a great social institution, a divinely ordered Body, a religious Nation in which, as he says, "each part commoveth and helpeth other both here and in heaven," the king governing, the clergy teaching and ministering, the knights defending, the commons providing for all material wants. It is a fine and just conception, nor need we regard it with suspicion because it was suggested, as he himself admits, by Plato, for it is also scriptural. Nor need we object that the clergy alone appear as teachers—this seemed natural to men of that time. But unity depends upon law, and law as we have

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seen is, in Wycliffe's view, an expression of power, a fiat, and not an idea, given from above and needing to be enforced by power. Hence his Republic is a despotism which can only be maintained by a despot, a king or a pope. Hence, again, it has no inner guarantee of permanence.

What we want is a law which is an idea and not merely a fiat, a law speaking to the reason, working from the heart, enfolding the principles of sacrifice and brotherly love, and therefore self-disseminating.

It lay ready to his hand in the Gospel, but Wycliffe had too much dry light and too little tenderness to realise all that the Cross might have taught him.

Nevertheless he was a prophet, and his vision of the Church-State still marks the primary goal towards which all our efforts should tend. Beyond this lies the still greater vision of the Church-World. When we have realised the first, the second will not be far off.

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VI

A KEMPIS

We have been considering a great churchman, Grosseteste, and a great reformer, Wycliffe. Now we pass on to a third very notable type of character, a great mystic, Thomas a Kempis.[1] There is always this third way of dealing with the troubles and perplexities of the world. When a good man is driven to the sad conclusion that the evils of his time are too much for him, he can always wrap his cloak about him and keep the sacred fire burning in his own heart. If truth, justice, and peace are out of fashion, he can always possess these graces in the inviolable sanctuary of his soul.

This is not necessarily the resource of the timid. George Fox, for instance, though a profound mystic had plenty of nerve and courage. Nor is it necessarily barren, for those virtues which the mystic cultivates—the love of God, veracity, purity—cannot exist without shining and doing good. It is a bad

[1] I would ask the benevolent reader to regard this lecture as a supplement to what I have said in my introduction to the English translation of the *Imitation*. I have rather avoided repeating what is said there. The two most helpful books upon the subject known to me are Hirsche's *Prolegomena*, and the *Study of the Imitatio Christi*, by L. A. Wheatley.

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sign when, as at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, men are flocking into monasteries and casting off their domestic and civil obligations. But it takes many kinds of people to make a world. We want politicians, soldiers, men of business. But it is desirable that they should all be religious, that every man should do his duty in the faith and fear of God. Now, if society is to be permeated by religion, there must be reservoirs of religion; like those great storage places up among the hills which feed the pipes by which water is carried to every home in the city. We shall need a special class of students of God, of men and women whose primary and absorbing interest it is to work out the spiritual life in all its purity and integrity. They will be an unworldly and unpractical race—all great students and artists are so. They are theorists and idealists. But theories and ideas, however abstract they may appear, have, if solid, surprising practical results. Out of Faraday's abstruse investigations into Nature came the telegraph and the electric tramcar, and out of the transcendental contemplation of the saint spring the principles which are to regulate our families and our trades-unions. Whether monasticism is the best shape for the purely religious life in our own times is doubtful, but this is a mere question of form. The thing itself—contemplation, mysticism, the pursuit of religion in itself and by

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itself—is a standing necessity in every healthy State.

The historical setting which is necessary for the understanding of a Kempis has already been provided. It was in brief the struggle for the temporal power which in the fourteenth century brought the mediæval Western Church to the verge of disruption. But this struggle was itself the result of two deeper causes; the low moral standard of the world was one, and the low intellectual standard of the Church was the other. The scandalous war between Lewis of Bavaria and the Pope was the direct occasion of the revolt of Wycliffe in England, and of Tauler at Strasbourg. You should read Tauler's sermons if you wish to get the right line of approach to a Kempis. They have been translated into English by Miss Winkworth. The shape taken by the movement followed the lines marked out for it by the temperament of the two men. Wycliffe, like most English radicals, was logical and political; Tauler, like most German thinkers, was swayed by mysticism and metaphysics. The main points in Wycliffe's eyes were the denial of transubstantiation and the redress of practical abuses. Tauler's hopes were fixed on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and the renewal of the Day of Pentecost. Round him and the other mystical leaders, Nicholas of Basle, Eckhart, Suso, Ruysbroek, gathered a number of religious societies,

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free and informal guilds of men and women, in the Church yet not exactly of the Church, followers of the Inner Light, waiting for the outpouring of the spirit of prophecy. Their history you may find in Neander; their temper, a little extravagant at times, a little overwrought, a little undisciplined, but always most deeply and beautifully Christian, unfolds itself in the sermons of Tauler, in the *Theologia Germanica*, a book which was dear to Luther, in the visions of the Lady Julian of Norwich,[1] or in Richard Rolle, the hermit of Hampole, for even in England the mystics were not unrepresented.

All these societies were more or less what we should call Quakers, though they never broke away from the Church. But the belief in personal inspiration, though it lies at the very foundation of religion, and though none but a dead Church can ever attempt to suppress it, needs strong safeguards if it is not to pass over into the most unwholesome fanaticism. All true Christians are personally inspired; but the inspiration of each must be supplemented and checked by the inspiration of the brethren. Shall we say that, as the whole image of God is found only in the whole world which He created, so the whole Spirit can be discerned only in the whole Church? It was this sense of the mischief of unrestricted mysticism, a mischief which was only too visible and palpable,

[1] See *Revelations of Divine Love*, Julian of Norwich; edited by Grace Warrack.

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that called forth Gerard Groot and Florentius Radewyn, just as the excesses of early Quakerism called forth John Wesley. The object of Groot and Radewyn was to provide an organisation, which, while offering free scope to the devout life, should yet be strong enough to keep this explosive force within the bounds of sanity. They found it in a system of lay societies, the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life, living under the same roof with strict religious discipline, yet bound by no vows; poor, yet earning their own bread by their own daily labour. These formed what we may call the rank and file of the new army. But it needed officers; and this want was satisfied by the creation of another group of regular monasteries of Augustinian canons, whose rule was preferred as less ascetic, and as more closely allied to education than others. Luther, you may remember, was an Augustinian canon. One of these was the Agnetenberg, Mount St. Agnes, near Zwolle, to the east of the Zuider Zee, in the Dutch province of Overyssel. Scarcely a trace is left of the monastery. The mount is merely a low swell in the midst of a flat and featureless country of great swamps and grassy meadows. Renan wished to persuade himself that the author of the *Imitation* was Abbot Gesson of Vercelli, because he liked to think that those immortal pages were written under the sunny Italian

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sky, among the vines, and the ruins of the old artistic world.[1] But there is no reasonable doubt that this famous book was the work of Thomas a Kempis, or that it was written in a homely little Dutch convent, in a place where nature wears her homeliest aspect, far from the great centres of traffic and learning and from the noise of stirring events. The society from which a Kempis shrank was that of slow Dutch peasants, or of the solid burghers of quiet Dutch towns. He knew but little of the tragedy of life, and nothing of its pageantry.

He was the son of decent peasants, and the name by which he is usually known is derived from Kempen, the place where he was born. His real family name was Hemerken; it is derived from "hammer," and is the Flemish equivalent of our Smith. At the age of twelve he was put into the Brother-house of Deventer, where he stayed seven years. Here he was taught to read, to write a beautiful hand, and to sing; here also he was imbued with some slight tincture of the Latin classics. This was all the education that he ever received. He was, we may say, an inspired choir boy.

From Deventer he passed to Mount St. Agnes in the year 1400 or thereabouts, and at Mount St. Agnes he lived till the day of his death in 1471. In the whole of this long space of time he does not appear to have spent more than three years away from his

[1] *Études d'histoire religieuse.*

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beloved cell. Ninety years in all he dwelt upon this earth. He added nothing to the knowledge, and nothing to the wealth of mankind. He copied out a certain number of good books, including the Bible, with the loving care of a mediæval scribe, he trained the novices in his convent for some time at any rate, and he wrote a handful of devotional treatises, of which only four, those which in their collected form bear the name of the *Imitation*, can be said to have found readers. Even these are not finished. The third and fourth books are loose, prosy, and rambling, and have no colophon at the end. Somehow it would seem that he never succeeded in getting them into a shape which satisfied his delicate taste. In the first and second books every word is polished like a diamond, and there are constant rhymes like the tinkling of bells running through the melody of the prose.

It is not a large performance, and it might be said that he passed rather an idle existence. Dreams in his bleak cell, dreams in the convent garden with its dull outlook over the marshes of the Yssel, or perhaps no view at all except high walls, dreams in the convent cemetery where his brethren slept beneath nameless mounds of turf—these must have been the staple of his life. But you may say much the same thing of any poet, and this man was a spiritual poet whose dreams were of the kingdom of heaven. Like all

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great poets he was a magician, and has laid his spell upon the most extraordinary people, people who were not like him in the least, and did not believe in anything that he cared for, people who lived in the rush of the nineteenth century, and pinned their faith on the hard facts of science, and did not agree with him even as to the moral law. You will remember the use made of the *Imitation* by George Eliot in the *Mill on the Floss*. His little book has been a sort of Agnostic's Bible. We can hardly think after all that his time was ill-spent. Nay, we may believe that, if any one were just to live as pure a life, without writing anything at all, he would not have lived in vain.

He was one of those students of God from whom the world has learned more than from almost any other, and there is a sort of profanity in lecturing about him and putting him as it were beneath the microscope. No one ought to be told anything about him who does not know and love him already. You may remember perhaps what John Keble said to one of his pupils who airily spoke of Law's *Serious Call* as a "fine book"—"You might as well tell me that the Day of Judgment will be a fine sight."[1] You cannot praise a masterpiece without impertinence, and it is deadly dangerous to find fault with it; the chances are that you are only exposing your own stupidity. You must not say "I like Homer," or "I don't like

[1] The story is told in the *Autobiography* of Isaac Williams.

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Homer," unless you want to write yourself down a vulgarian. Great men should be treated with great reverence, and this little Dutch monk is, in his way, a very beautiful way, one of the greatest. Let us say at once where it is that, through no fault either of his or of ours, we are in imperfect sympathy with him, and get the thing out of the way in as few words as possible. A Kempis was a mediæval monk, and as we read him we come every now and then on doctrines and practices which are characteristic of the Middle Ages and of monasticism. Well, they will do you no harm. You ought to know what they were, but we have outlived them and passed beyond them. We can regard them with a large historical charity; they were, we may say, the husk of the corn, which with all reverence we may put upon one side. Shall we express it thus? These mediæval saints had been taught that the way to sacrifice the reason was not to use it; we have been brought to see that the way to sacrifice the reason is to sanctify it. It is the harder way, let us not forgot that; and it has its own perils, let us not forget that either.

What you ought to learn in all your historical reading—indeed in almost all your reading of every kind, is the right way of looking at the past. A great Oxford teacher used to recommend his pupils who were studying Thucydides to keep ready at hand three pencils, a red, a blue, and a black, and to

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underline, with the red, truths which were true for all time; with the blue, truths which were true for that particular time; and, with the black, opinions which were not true for any time. There are beliefs which are eternal, stamped upon nature by the hand of its Creator; there are others which are, as it were, the beliefs of childhood, reflecting faithfully the experience of childhood, but waiting to be corrected and broadened by the larger views of mature age; there are others again which are the offspring of mere ignorance, survivals of primitive savagery. Well, we are to underline them in different colours. But it is not an easy task. On the contrary, the power to make rightly those red, blue, and black dashes is the fruit that grows upon the very topmost twig of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that is to say, it is the fruit of a perfected education.

Now let us take as instances these three men of whom I have been speaking, Grosseteste, Wycliffe, and a Kempis. All three are our spiritual fathers. Their blood runs in our veins, and we should not be what we are, unless they had done what they did. They were good men who spent their lives in the search of truth, and it is not conceivable that they should have taught anything that was merely evil. By far the greater part was absolutely good. It is in the half-truths that the difficulty lies. Now what shall we say about these? Some people, you know,

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go to work in a passion, they see only the evil of the half-truth, and would tear up the past and throw it into the wastepaper basket of oblivion. You cannot do that, of course, any more than you can get yourself a new father. Some again see nothing but the good, and would not willingly give up a scrap of the past. But you cannot do that either, any more than you can always remain a child. Always you must choose the right and reject the wrong, proving all things, holding fast that which is good, turning back the lamp of knowledge on the past, following the torch of hope in the future. And we have the Gospel to guide us, that divine book, which by the help of deeper scholarship and larger experience we understand better than a Kempis; though, it may be, we do not follow its precepts with anything like the same singleness of heart.

We shall surely agree with a Kempis in thinking that the knowledge and love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is the highest object of human effort and aspiration. "Vanity of vanities," he says, "and all is vanity: except to love God and to serve Him only." That is the foundation of the moral law, the life of all society, the source of all prosperity. But a Kempis was also a mystic. Now what is meant by that hard word? and how far will you go with him there? Well, first of all there are two

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ways of reasoning. One is what we call usually the scientific. You observe the facts, as many facts as you can collect. They are all facts, and as facts they all have the same value. In some of them you discern a common idea, what we call a law; these you say you understand; others you say you do not understand, because you have not yet grasped their meaning. You find out one law after another, each higher and wider than the last, and so you approach nearer and nearer to that one great final law, which shall sum up in perfect expression all that exists or can exist. But we have not achieved that as yet. Still there remains, and probably always will remain, a fringe of the unknown around the circle of light and knowledge. Now what shall we say? Where there is light and knowledge there is the possibility of God. But who or what dwells in the penumbra, in the outer darkness? We cannot by scientific methods answer this question; and thus it would seem that there must always be room for Agnosticism. And yet we may notice that the student of science is always pressing on with unquenchable ardour into that undiscovered country. Why does he do that? Does he believe that he will find the Devil there? Surely not. What he believes is that law rules everywhere; that it is always beautiful and good, and that its discovery is a prize worth any expenditure of labour. So that

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we may doubt, after all, whether there is such a thing as Agnosticism, except in the form of contented ignorance.

But the mystic takes a different road. He says with St. Augustine, "Thou hast created us unto Thyself, and our heart finds no rest until it rests in Thee." The Gospel and the human soul are made for one another. You can test that and verify it by experiment, as millions of people have done. Only you must make the experiment on yourself, and therefore you cannot prove it to others, any more than others can prove it to you. But it is the most certain and the most important fact in the world, and whoever has grasped it will feel that the margin of ignorance cannot alter it in the least. There are things which we cannot explain, but they cannot alter or destroy the nature of human happiness, because, if they could, they would have done so already. Their power to help or to hurt us does not depend upon our comprehension of them.

You will perceive then that a Kempis cannot argue with you. All that he attempts is to show you a sight: he just unfolds to his reader's view the delicate life of his own spirit; if you can see it and comprehend, well; but you must ask no more. And the reason for this is plain. His religion is entirely a thing of the spirit. "He to whom the Eternal Word speaks," he says, "is freed from many

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opinions." You see what he means. Wearied with the strife of words, with the endless see-saw of debate, the soul turns to itself and finds there what it had vainly sought elsewhere. "Thou shalt never have rest," he says again, "unless thou be inwardly united unto Christ." Religion is the answer of the heart to its Father and Creator. Grasp this, and you will understand the contrast, which he is perpetually drawing, between the inward and the outward. The inner life, the life of the Spirit in God, is the great reality; all else is outside and of far lower value.

Now, how is this inner union brought to pass? First, a Kempis says, by Compunction, that is to say, Repentance, the turning of the soul towards the light in love and fear. And next by Simplicity and Purity.

"By these two wings a man is lifted up from earth: namely by Simplicity and Purity. Simplicity ought to be in intention; Purity in affection. Simplicity intends God: Purity apprehends and tastes Him. No good action will hinder thee: if thou be free from inordinate affection within. If thou intend and seek nothing else but the pleasure of God and the good of thy neighbour: thou shalt enjoy perfect internal freedom. If thy heart were right: then every creature would be a mirror of life and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so small and

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abject but it reflects the goodness of God. If thou wert good and pure within: then wouldest thou see and understand all things well without hindrance. A pure heart penetrates heaven and hell."

There you have the essence of what a Kempis has to say. Simplicity in intention, a will bent to do the pleasure of God and that only, and Purity in affection, a heart that can truly say, "there is nothing upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee," these are the great teachers, these, if a man follow them faithfully, will open the way into all that is best worth knowing. A Kempis disparages earthly science, but only in relation to this, the highest knowledge of all. He was not like Grosseteste, an accomplished scholar. Perhaps if we had challenged him and he had cared to answer, he might have said that men are apt to invert the relations of knowledge and religion. Knowledge does not make religion, but is made by it. Notice what a Kempis says about small and abject creatures which reflect the goodness of God. I think it may be said with truth that the beauty and instructiveness of little things and little people is a discovery which we owe to Christianity. The poetry of simple homely lives was not discerned by any one before Prudentius and Paulinus, two Christian poets. Simple homely facts were neglected in the same way by the great thinkers of antiquity. Inductive science is the child of the

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Gospel, and it rests upon that truth which a Kempis learned from Simplicity, "that every creature is a mirror of life and a book of holy doctrine." You can hardly overestimate the influence of Christian modes of thought upon modern art and modern science. Both owe their vitality to the modern conviction of the infinite value of the little roadside facts. If you call up the names of the great artists, the great poets, the great thinkers, you will find that their greatness depends upon this—that they can show you how the finest beauty, the deepest wisdom, are enshrined in the most commonplace objects, in the love of a mother for her child, in the flower on a crannied wall, in a pebble, in a beetle; as some one has said that all heaven is reflected in a dew-drop. If you pursue this thought to its ultimate foundation, you will find that it rests upon the belief in the divine authorship of Nature, and in the special sanctity of human nature, and these again repose upon the belief in the Incarnation of our blessed Lord. At any rate this has been the actual course of history.

We shall observe again that a Kempis speaks of all knowledge in the same tone of depreciation. Even theology, he would say, is not the chief thing; it is the fruit and not the root, the garment and not the life. "What have we to do," he asks, "with genera and species?" That is to say, with logic and scholasticism. Again, "I had rather feel compunction

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than know its definition. If thou knowest the whole Bible in the letter, and the sayings of all philosophers: what would all that profit thee without the love of God and grace?" Not that he had no theology; quite the reverse of this. He held that if a man lived the right life, and by this he meant morality under instruction, not as many do morality without instruction, he would come into real communion with Christ, which hardly needs definition, and is indeed so wonderful and spiritual that it hardly admits of definition. This is what he means when he says, "Happy is the man whom truth teaches by itself, not by fleeting figures and words, but as it is in itself." "The Kingdom of God," he says in another place, "is within you. . . . The Kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, which is not given to the unholy. Christ will come unto thee and show thee His own consolation: if thou prepare for Him a worthy abode with Him." If you enter into the spirit of these words, you will see how useless, how absurd it is to argue or contend about this Kingdom of God, this hidden manna, this music of the soul. In fact, we never do contend about it. What we fight for is, not the temple itself, but the props and buttresses which we have built up round the temple, for fear lest it should fall. But that spiritual house, made of living stones, never can fall.

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There is much more that might be said about a Kempis. One soul is very like another; our lives even are not so different as we think. What we call history is dry and abstract; it is the condensed extract of the world's experience, a good tonic rather than appetising food. It is like a map of the world, most instructive but a little thin. It is little good to journey through a strange land unless you stop here and there, and try to make acquaintance with living men and women. Here it is that biography comes in to help us—biography and still more autobiography — books which, like the *Confessions* of St. Augustine or the *Imitation*, bring before us the authentic record of a soul's experience. A Kempis was a man of singularly beautiful character; and he has told us how he became what he was. It was not by accident by any means. You may not be of quite the same stamp, and you must make allowances for differences of circumstance. But he can give you good advice on a wide variety of religious questions, and he will enlarge your view of spiritual possibilities. You can hardly know him without loving him, and the love of a good man is always great gain. However, I must not attempt to show you in detail the course of his pilgrimage. Let me quote just one other passage which will bring us back to the special subject of these lectures. It is from the chapter of the King's High Way of the Holy Cross:—

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"No man hath so hearty a sense of the Passion of Christ: as he who hath suffered the like himself. The Cross therefore is always ready: and every where waits for thee. Thou canst not escape it, whithersoever thou runnest; for go where thou wilt thou carriest thyself with thee: and shalt ever find thyself. Turn thyself upwards, turn thyself downwards; turn thyself outwards, turn thyself inwards: every where thou shalt find the Cross; and every where thou must needs keep patience: if thou wilt have inward peace, and earn an everlasting crown."

There you have the mystic solution of the evils of the world. Grosseteste found it in resolute and upright administration; Wycliffe in outer reformation—in better teaching and better laws; a Kempis in inner reformation, in the purifying of man's own heart and reason. All three were right, and none is wholly right, and therefore all three failed. Grosseteste died with his soul full of righteous indignation against his king and his pope. Wycliffe's work came in his own time to nothing, and the monastery of Zwolle was almost immediately overwhelmed by the deluge of the Reformation. Such is the fate of all one-sided effort, of all effort, that is to say, which does not combine the spirit of all three.

We may add that the truth of a Kempis is the deepest truth of all. Where the heart is not right,

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nothing can be right; there can be no wholesome belief, no good laws, no upright administration, no real progress of any kind. It is the inner life that we want to mend, and Compunction, Simplicity, and Purity are, as they always have been, the only agencies by which the soul is cleansed, and its purblind eyes are opened. Further, it is true that, whatever evil prevails in the world around, virtue and peace may always be found within. Nay, they must be found within, if they are to be found at all. Make the circumstances of life as perfect as possible—it is our duty to do so, and there is much as we all know that can be improved—it will still remain true that man's worst enemy is himself, and that he cannot be happy, if his heart is not right in the sight of God.

All this is true, and we shall feel it to be an inestimable blessing that there should be men whose one office it is to preach and to practise those truths alone, who in the world are absolutely unworldly, and carry the graces of purity, meekness, and patience to their finest and most ethereal expression.

But as I said before, it takes many kinds of people to make a world. Turn again to those beautiful words I quoted a moment ago: "Every where thou shalt find the Cross; and every where thou must needs keep patience." Yes, that is true. But, besides that cross which God lays upon us all,

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there are crosses which we manufacture, and lay upon our brethren. What shall we do with them? A Kempis does not say. "Be patient," he tells us, "have peace within." It would be a good answer, if we had only our own souls and bodies to think of. But, even while a Kempis was writing his little books, Huss was being burnt alive at Constance; and surely this was a manufactured cross.

Meekness and patience then are not all; justice also is wanted, and courage, and these are combatant virtues. Shall we say that the perfect reformer would be one who combined the resolution of Grosseteste, the keen logic of Wycliffe, and the loving simplicity of a Kempis? But where shall we find him except in the Son of Man, in whom alone the warring elements of goodness and severity are mingled in divine equipoise?

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VII

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.—I

I PROPOSE to deal in these lectures with two great words expressing two great spiritual ideas, Unity and Continuity; and I will endeavour to illustrate them from the history of that period of rapid growth which we know as the English Reformation. I do not propose to give a consecutive history of the Reformation. It has often been written, and the tale is sufficiently familiar. Let me only call attention to the chief moments of the story. They will help us to see more clearly what we mean by that most important term, the Unity of the Church. This is the great lesson to be learned by the study of that much debated period. The details are often of very little significance. The intricate history of Henry's divorce business, the character of that singular king, are of little more interest than the other question, whether Anne Boleyn was a paragon of beauty or a very unattractive person. This also was hotly debated, and some, who had possibly never seen Anne Boleyn, and were possibly not expert judges of female attractions, gave their judgment on this side

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or on that with perfect confidence and in strict observance of party lines.[1]

There are one or two introductory remarks that may be permitted.

The Reformation was, of course, a time of the most heated controversy. To some extent and in some quarters it is so still. But we can at any rate avoid the odious language that was used in the stress of battle. In the sixteenth century men permitted themselves outrageous licence, even in disputes of a purely literary character. When religious belief was in question they often cast aside all self-restraint. Instances meet us upon every side. We need only remember how Harding called Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* a "huge dunghill of stinking martyrs." Perhaps there is not much to choose in this respect between the two sides, but we may pardon a little warmth in a man who, whenever he ventures upon argument, is told that he ought to be burnt alive. We ought, of course, most carefully to eschew every term that is calculated to give offence. It seems a

[1] Sanders, *De Schismate Anglicano*, p. 15, says that she was "lean-visaged, long-sided, gobber-toothed, yellow-complexioned, with a wen in her neck." Fuller says that she was "of a handsome person and beautiful face," and appeals with confidence to the judgment of Henry, "whom all knew well read in books and better in beauties." Bishop Stubbs, a late but impartial authority, disables the judgment of Henry, but adopts a *via media* between the extreme views of the Papist and the Puritan. "His wives—the deadly-lively sort of ladies, whose portraits are, if not a justification, at least a colourable occasion for understanding the readiness with which he put them away." Three lamentable instances of the presumption of theologians.

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platitude to say this; but the warning is still by no means needless.

Now here let me pass a criticism upon one to whose learning and intelligence the Church of England is greatly indebted, the late Canon Dixon. See what he says: "The proper historical designation of those who set themselves against the doctrinal system of the Church (he means the mediæval Western Church) at this time (he is speaking of the reign of Henry VIII.) is one which they have seldom obtained in general history. If, according to the wont of history, they are to bear the name which their contemporaries gave them, they must be called heretics. . . . Their proper historical name is that which they have received least." I notice with surprise and regret that Mr. James Gairdner, in his learned *History of the English Church during the Sixteenth Century*, adopts the same usage. Well, this strikes me as amazing, and, I must add, as deplorable. If everybody is to bear the name which his contemporaries give him, Canon Dixon was and Mr. Gairdner is a heretic, anathematised as such by the majority of the Christian world. They would themselves have been burnt alive by the same men who sent Thomas Bilney to the stake. Every one in this room is in the same plight. These early English Protestants did not hold one single belief which is not held or regarded as tenable amongst

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us at the present day. Further, it is not the wont of history to fix upon parties the nicknames by which they have been branded by theological or political hatred. On the contrary, it is an evil trick, of which no scholar ought to be guilty.

Let me add that some people in our own time are accustomed to speak of Tyndale and the early Dissidents, and of all who, like them, incline to the extremer views of the reformers as Protestants, using this term also as a byword of reproach, in much the same sense as heretic. Here again it should be remembered that, if we are to bear the name given to us by our contemporaries, we are all Protestants. But it is not fair to degrade this appellation, which Jewel accepted and Laud did not refuse.

Another much needed caution is this. In all historical surveys it is of the last importance, if we wish to grasp the truth, to get down to the principles involved. Now it has often been said or implied that the reformers had no principles. There is this amount of truth in the statement, that their attitude was at first largely critical and negative. The same thing happens in almost all great changes. What men see first is the evil which must be corrected; the principle of which the practical abuse is a consequence, is not so readily discerned; and it is more difficult still to ascertain the opposite principle from which a better state of things may be expected to

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arise. Hence, in times of change, the first efforts of reconstruction are tentative and imperfect. The guiding ideas of the reformers will, I trust, become clearer as we go on, but there is one, one that probably enfolds all the others, that meets us on the very doorstep. The reformers stood for Freedom as against Compulsion. The imposing unity of the mediæval Church was built upon force. You may think that a hard saying, yet it is strictly true. From the time of Theodosius the Great dissent had been a capital offence.[1] The long Arian dispute was silenced, not by the arguments of Athanasius or Basil, nor by the wise decisions of the Council of Constantinople, but by the terrible laws of the first persecuting emperor, and from that time onwards the agreement of the Church had rested in the last resort upon the sword and the stake. What the reformers claimed was the right of the individual to judge for himself in all matters that have not been revealed. It is perfectly true that the reformers did not at first grasp all that was involved in their own claim. Calvin put Servetus to death, refusing to the Unitarian the freedom which he claimed for the Presbyterian, and there were many lamentable instances of the same dreadful inconsistency. Only as time wore on did it become clear that the ultimate choice lies between a system which

[1] See the *Codex Theodosianus* with the notes of Gothofredus.

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holds it right to use force for spiritual purposes and one which holds it wrong.

There is another point which falls naturally within these introductory remarks. It has sometimes been thought that the Council of Trent made, or ought to make, a great difference in our judgment of the Reformation, and that in particular certain of the Thirty-nine Articles have rather lost their point since that Council finished its work. It is an entirely modern notion, and would certainly not have commended itself to Archbishop Laud, who charges the Council with "dangerous and wilful error," and with adding twelve new articles to the Creed of Constantinople.[1] Indeed it seems to be without any kind of foundation. As far as regards doctrine, the purpose and the effect of the Council of Trent were merely to codify the existing system of the Church of Rome, and to plant a row of spikes along the top of the wall which divided that Church from the men of the new learning. Further, it carefully left open the door by which the new dogmas of the nineteenth century were to enter in. Every argument employed by the reformers in 1545, before the Council began its sessions, remained just as strong, or, if you please, just as weak, in 1563 when it was dissolved. All hope of compromise or reconciliation had vanished, but then no far-sighted man had ever entertained such a hope.

[1] In the *Conference with Fisher*.

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We may now pass on to the subject immediately before us, the first stage, we may call it, in the history of the English Reformation, the initial chapter comprised in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. Two great questions were agitated at this time, that of the papal jurisdiction, that of the doctrine or explanation of the Eucharist. Of these the first is the only point definitely and purposely raised by Henry VIII. Probably the king thought that he was not making any very great change. The jurisdiction of the Pope had only recently attained its full dimensions. Ultramontanism—the idea that the Pope was superior to a General Council—dated only from the failure of the great Councils of the fifteenth century, and was still not generally held. Further, the authority of the Pope in England had more than once been limited by statute, and it may have seemed that it was but another step, and not a very long step, in the same direction to abolish it by statute altogether. Why should not the system, of which upon the whole Henry approved, go on just as well under different management? If this was his view he soon found out his error. See what happened. "Two days after the death of Cromwell," writes Neal, the Puritan historian, "there was a very odd execution of Protestants and Papists at the same time and place. The Protestants were Dr. Barnes, Mr. Gerrard, and Mr. Jerome, all clergymen and Lutherans . . . . Four Papists,

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Gregory Buttolph, Adam Damplin, Edmund Brindholme, and Clement Philpot, were by the same Act attainted for denying the king's supremacy and adhering to the Bishop of Rome. The Protestants were burnt and the Papists hanged; the former cleared themselves of heresy by reciting the articles of their faith at the stake, and died with great devotion and piety; and the latter, though grieved to be drawn on the same hurdle with those they accounted heretics, declared their hearty forgiveness of all their enemies." Odd is not quite the word that should be applied to this barbarous act. Yet Neal is not wholly wrong. What strikes us about Henry VIII. is, not so much his barbarity, as his amazing absurdity. The man who could think of sending Anne Boleyn's father on an embassy to Charles V. to explain why Henry wanted to turn the emperor's aunt Katherine out of doors, was surely one of the strangest beings that ever sat upon a throne.

Nevertheless Henry's character is one of those details of which I spoke a few minutes ago. We are not in any way concerned to defend his personal morality or the wisdom of all his actions. The question is, Was he right or was he wrong in emancipating his kingdom from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome? It must be observed that we cannot now consider the act as his alone. Even in Henry's own time it is probable that the majority of our people

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acquiesced in his ecclesiastical policy, and since then the breach has been solemnly re-enacted.

We cannot deny that the assertion of the royal supremacy was a most serious step. It made a breach in the visible unity of the Church. Or, we should rather say, it made a new breach, for we must not forget that, not to speak of Germany or Switzerland, the dioceses of the East never had been bound to the dioceses of the West by the same tie which united the latter to one another. Henry and Elizabeth asserted only what the Easterns always had asserted, the independence of a national Church. Even the royal supremacy always has been, and at this day is, the doctrine of the East.

It was serious also in another way. At once it became evident that a very great part of the Western system depended for its effective sanction entirely upon the spiritual autocracy. The new learning did in the main two things; it introduced a more accurate exegesis of Holy Scripture, and it turned tradition into ecclesiastical history. The latter change was, in the early days of the Reformation, even more important than the first, though, of course, the two are very closely connected. Tradition became history; that is to say, a serious attempt was made to distinguish the successive strata of opinion in order of time. What had been regarded, more or less, as a primæval and homogeneous whole was broken up into a chain

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of mutations, each of which could be dated with tolerable accuracy. The notion of Evolution was applied to the Church; and this step carries with it a great change in the mental attitude, not unlike that produced by modern geology in regard to the history of the earth. Men drew the natural inference, that anything which could be shown to be a later accretion was matter of human ordinance, not of divine revelation. On all these additions to the primary deposit there had once been differences of opinion in the Church, and there might lawfully be differences of opinion again. Now it is quite obvious that, as soon as this view has struck root, there will be no more uniformity on these secondary points except as the result of compulsion. It is quite obvious also that kings, whether heathen or Christian, cannot apply compulsion. It is absurd for them to make the attempt. None but a spiritual autocrat can work the Inquisition. Hence the renunciation of papal jurisdiction led immediately to an extensive and unfortunate pullulation of divisions. It need not have done so. There remained Scripture and sound tradition, for some tradition, and the most important, is undoubtedly sound. But the Papacy had so exasperated men's minds by interference in politics, by interference in science, by excommunications and interdicts on Christian people who ventured to utter their own thoughts on matters where every Christian is free

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to speak as he pleases, that moderation was almost impossible.

For this particular point, the renunciation of the Roman obedience, the most important documents are Pole's *Defence of the Unity of the Church*, and the writings which appeared on the other side, the *Letters* of Starkey and Tunstall, and the *Bishops' Book*.

Reginald Pole was a member of the royal family of England, a friend and patron of scholars if not exactly a scholar himself, a man of attractive personality, and deeply religious. He was a member of the Oratory of Divine Love, a select society of eminent Italian scholars and divines, who loved letters and art in every shape, and strove to assimilate, even in their theology, the spirit of the Renaissance. Many of this group of highly cultivated men, including Pole himself, looked upon Protestantism with considerable sympathy, and, on the fundamental question of Justification by Faith, held views substantially identical with those of Luther. So deeply was Pole distrusted on this account that he found it desirable to withdraw from the Council of Trent, and was accused of heresy at the very time when he was burning Protestants in England.

Henry was extremely anxious to draw from his kinsman and pensioner, whose royal blood gave him great consideration in England, while his birth, courtesy, and munificence made him a personage of

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importance in Italy also, some express declaration in favour of the royal supremacy. But here again the king showed his absurdity, and quite mistook his man. Pole belonged to the type of Erasmus. He was not unwilling to provide for Lutheranism a shelter within the Church, but if the Church, as he understood the word, determined to anathematise Lutheranism, he was quite willing to accept and execute the decree.

What he did in answer to the threats and cajoleries of Henry was to send the king his as yet unpublished book in *Defence of the Unity of the Church.* It is a diatribe rather than an argument. So long as the writer dwells upon the immorality, the barbarity, the tyranny of Henry we are not disinclined to agree with him, except in so far as we feel that Pole only wanted the king to substitute one kind of tyranny for another. But the book, in fact, resolves itself into the assertion that he who casts off his obedience to the Pope thereby cuts himself off from the Church, outside which there is no salvation. All orders, all sacraments, all spiritual life come to the body through its visible head, apart from whom men are not Christians at all. Pole was in a sense a moderate man, and protested that in his book he had not said a word about the temporal power. But he had called upon the English people to rebel, and upon the Emperor and the King of France to depose Henry by force of arms, on the ground that he was a

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heretic. "If the Cæsar," he had written, "were already in arms against the Turk, if he were now crossing the Bosphorus to the attack, I myself would follow him and cry, Turn thy sails, and pursue a worse enemy of the faith, a viler heretic, one who is smitten with the same plague that is devouring thy Germany." Whatever Pole might really think about the temporal power, he knew quite well that the papal pretensions included the right to exterminate a heretic king.

Starkey and Tunstall replied that unity stands in unity of faith and of spirit, or in faith and ritual, and that Henry and his people had not slipped aside from either. They were technically right at the time, when the Act of Six Articles was in force. But they were not so clear-sighted as Pole. Pole knew perfectly well that correctness of faith and ritual, according to the Roman notion, were in the long run incompatible with the rejection of the Pope. But apart from this, he insists that identity of faith and worship is not enough. "This unity helpeth not, except a man agree in the head of the Church that the rest of the Church doth follow."

The *Bishops' Book* employed against Pole the argument from history. In it Cranmer and some other bishops "showed the usurpations of Popes; and how late it was ere they took this superiority upon them, some hundred years passing before they

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did it; and that all bishops were limited to their own dioceses by one of the eight Councils to which every Pope did swear; and how the papal authority was first derived from the emperor and not from Christ." In these words Strype summarises this appeal to history, an appeal which in the light of modern research could be put even more forcibly than by Cranmer and his brethren. But development is a double-edged weapon, and I propose to deal with it later on.

I need not pursue this point any further. The question remains exactly where it stood in the days of Henry VIII. Still one side maintains that the spiritual autocracy of the Pope is not scriptural, and therefore not a matter of faith, and therefore not essential to unity. Still the other replies that it is an absolutely necessary inference from the promise to Peter, and therefore a divine command, which may not be disobeyed without loss of salvation.

Another most serious act in the great drama of the Reformation began in 1547, the first year of Edward VI., when a debate on the subject of the Eucharist was held in Convocation. The particular point raised on this occasion concerned only the duty of receiving the sacrament in both kinds. Two years later, in 1549, the nature of the Presence was brought under discussion in the House of Lords and in the Oxford schools.

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On this subject opinions regarded as unorthodox were by no means new in England. Wycliffe had combined with his attack upon the papal dominion a scholastic critique of the doctrine of transubstantiation. His teaching upon the latter point is by no means free from obscurity. It is certain that he rejected the Lateran definition. Accidents, he said, cannot exist without a substance, otherwise God Himself is annihilated—meaning, I suppose, that what is admitted in one case must be admitted in all, and that, if attributes can exist without their proper substance, this must be true even of the divine attributes, in which case we have no argument left against Atheism. Some have thought that he taught what was afterwards known as consubstantiation, and there are phrases which favour this view. But, as he certainly used the term *efficax signum*, we may conclude that his doctrine was that which is associated with the name of Hooker. It is probable that there was no close agreement among his followers. Sir John Oldcastle, or Lord Cobham, as he is also called, who was burned in 1418, appears to have held Lutheran doctrines a century before the appearance of Luther.[1] Others, again, seem to have anticipated Zwingli, and taught that the elements were *nuda signa*, like the ring in marriage, or the stone which

[1] See his doctrine in Wilkins, iii. 356. Christ possessed both divinity and humanity, but the divinity was veiled and invisible beneath the humanity. So in the sacrament of the altar there is "verum corpus et verus panis."

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Jacob set up at Bethel. In the time of Henry VIII. all four views existed, but the king to the last tolerated only the Lateran definition, and punished with death all divergences. As soon as his heavy hand relaxed its grasp the inevitable debate broke out. How inevitable it was may be seen at a glance from the extraordinary weakness of the arguments with which Henry and his collaborator Bishop Fisher defended the legal view. Both undertake to prove the special doctrine of transubstantiation from the sacred Vulgate text, which they use in such a way as to show that they either did not know, or did not attach any value to, the original Greek text.[1] Fisher adds that St. Paul, in his account of the Last Supper, did not repeat the words *Bibite ex eo omnes*, because he foresaw that the Church would withdraw the cup from the laity. About the same time Clichthow,[2] a doctor of the Sorbonne, struck out another point. In Latin ritualistic usage the verb *facio* is sometimes used in a peculiar technical sense. *Quum faciam vitula pro*

[1] Henry says, in the *Assertio Septem Sacr:* "Nunc vero, quum vinum sit neutri generis, Christus ait non *hoc* sed *hic* est sanguis meus." Fisher repeats this: indeed, the similarity between the two is so great that I suspect it was really Fisher who supplied Henry with his theology.

[2] For Clichthow (Clitoveus) see *Biographie Universelle.* Neither Henry nor Fisher uses this argument from *facio.* It is not employed by Estius or Cornelius in their commentaries on 1 Cor. xi. 25, and in the Catechism of Trent, pars. ii. cap. iv. Qu. xx, *facio* is taken in its usual and proper sense = do. Clichthow's theory is not mentioned by M. Batiffol in that part of his interesting volume (*L'Eucharistie*) where he discusses the words of institution. But he slips it in, and apparently regards it as sound, in a later passage where he is considering the view of Justin Martyr.

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frugibus, says Virgil. Hence, in the Gospels, *Hoc facite* may mean, "Sacrifice this." A little later the same sense was forced upon the verb ποιεῖν in the Greek. This interpretation was rejected by Estius, Cornelius a Lapide, and the Council of Trent, and has not, so far as I know, been adopted in any commentary of the first rank. You will find the evidence set out in the Bishop of Birmingham's volume on the *Body of Christ*. These, however, were not the proofs upon which the defenders of the mediæval system relied. Behind these lay the authority of the Church, enforced by the papal authority. It had been so defined, and therefore all doubt was precluded. Henry, or rather Henry's prompters, were well aware that the particular definition in question came very late, but they insisted that this fact made no difference. "It has now been revealed to the Church," they replied. Here, again, we come to that ambiguous doctrine of Development which, as I have already said, must for the present be put upon one side.

I only refer to these details in order to show that debate was quite sure to arise, as soon as the fear of the stake was removed. It is not my desire to argue either for or against any of the four current explanations of the words of institution. I do not myself think that Scripture provides us with the means of deciding between them, and, if we look

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at history, and consider the intelligence, the learning, the sincerity of those by whom each of these four opinions is advocated, I do not see how we can come to any other conclusion. But what I desire to ask is, whether any one of these opinions can constitute, I do not say *a* bond of union, because manifestly it can do that, but *the* bond of union, whether it can be asserted of any one of them that the Holy Spirit has revealed this as the ultimate absolute truth about this profound mystery? If this could be maintained, then the Church might be justified in warning her children that, if they refuse to listen to the divine voice, they do so at peril to their souls, and in refusing to communicate with them, though she would not even then be justified in killing them. But if this cannot be maintained, it is a grave error to treat what is at best a pious opinion as a necessary and eternal truth.

Now permit me to remind you of that well-known passage where St. Paul solemnly and deliberately enumerates the conditions of unity (Eph. iv. 4–6): "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all." But he does not say "one Eucharist," still less does he say "one explanation of the Eucharist." Why does he omit this? Well, perhaps you might frame some

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kind of answer to this question. But compare this reticence of the Apostle with the incessant deadly emphasis laid upon this point in the sixteenth century; remember how Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were treated, because they departed from what they honestly regarded as a false opinion, and how Harding pursues them beyond the fire, and calls them "stinking martyrs," mainly on this account; and then ask whether men at that time had not reached—I do not say a doctrine, but a relative estimate of doctrines, very different from that of the New Testament. And how did this come about, unless from the elevation of sentiment or opinion into law?

If we look back at the history of the early Church, it seems quite clear that there was for a long time no concurrence of opinion on this deep subject. It would take me much too long to go through all the evidence minutely, but some little ought to be said.

Take Irenæus.[1] The Bread of the consecration is no longer "common bread," but still it is bread. The sacrament consists of two "things," an earthly

[1] Iren. iv. 18, 4, 5 (Stieren): "Quo modo autem constabit *eum panem in quo gratiæ actæ sint.*" I do not myself doubt that the two "things" are bread and thanksgiving which call down the blessing of God. So in v. 2, 3, ὁ γεγονὼς ἄρτος ἐπιδέχεται τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, I do not doubt that the λόγος is prayer; *cf.* Justin, *Apol.* i. 66, δι' εὐχῆς λόγου. Irenæus goes on to compare the consecrated Bread to the resurrection body, which is still a body, but has received the gift of immortality.

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and a heavenly. No looser word could have been chosen than "thing"; it may be here as broad as "grace" or "blessing"; it may be as definite as "substantial presence." Either Luther or Hooker might rely on this phrase, but certainly not the Lateran bishops.

Take Justin. The most striking peculiarity in the statement of this Father is that he speaks of "a change." I do not feel sure that I understand what he means; but I think he believed, not that the substance of the Bread was changed into the substance of the Body, but that the substance of the Body was changed into the substance of Bread. Other Fathers may not improbably have held this view, certainly Macarius Magnes did so.[1] But, in this case, we should here have a fifth view, which does not correspond to any of the four which are current now.

Take Tertullian.[2] This influential Latin Father says very distinctly that the Bread is a "figure" of the Body. So does the ancient *Didaskalia* about

[1] Justin, *Apol.* i. 66. See Macarius Mag. iii. 23. It may be observed that this is the only view which gives to the words of institution their plain literal sense. All other interpretations are allegorical, and take the words as not meaning exactly what they say.

[2] Tert. *Adv. Marc.* iv. 40: "'Hoc est corpus meum' dicendo, id est 'figura corporis mei.'" See also the *Canones Ecclesiastici* in Hauler's *Verona Fragments*, p. 112, and the *Liturgy of Serapion*, in J. T. S. vol. i. p. 105. It is impossible to say that "figure" applies only to the Bread before consecration, for Macarius Magnes expressly notices this as a prevalent, but, in his opinion, false, explanation of the sacrament—Οὐ γὰρ τύπος σώματος οὐδὲ τύπος αἵματος, ὥς τινες ἐγραψώδησαν.

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half a century later. Hooker could quote these authorities with comfort; not so Luther nor Innocent III.

Take Cyprian. I will ask you to remember a passage from which most commentators upon this Father avert their eyes. It is in the *De Lapsis*, and Cyprian is there telling with entire conviction what he believes to have happened to two unhappy renegades who had sacrificed under fear of death. They had obtained possession of portions of the consecrated bread, and with this they endeavoured (it was not an uncommon practice in those days) to communicate themselves in their own houses. One, a woman, could not open the little box in which she kept the sacrament because fire shot forth and terrified her; the other, a man, succeeded in raising the lid of his box, but found nothing but ashes inside, a fact which proves, Cyprian adds, *Dominum recedere cum negatur*, "that the Lord goes away when He is denied." Now what are we to say of these stories? They are superstitious beyond a doubt, and I fear we must admit that Cyprian was a superstitious man. Other Christians of the third century, though not many, suffer from the same taint. That miserable century, when the world was full of suffering and disaster, was the true beginning of the dark ages. Credulity was rampant among the heathen, and was beginning to infect

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even the Church. Even this good man St. Cyprian had not kept his head clear among the horrors of that age of catastrophes. But what form of belief underlies these wild stories? It was, I venture to think, the same kind of inverted transubstantiation which may be observed in Justin Martyr; the Sacred Body has been changed into the substance of bread. Yet this metamorphosis is dependent upon the faith of the recipient. Where faith is not, the Lord departs in a flame of fire, leaving only ashes behind.[1]

Or let us take Origen. None of the Ante-Nicene writers has expressed himself so fully and so clearly as Origen; there is not the slightest doubt as to his meaning. "It was not," he says, "that visible bread which He was holding in His hand that God the Word called His body; it was the Word, as a symbol whereof that bread was to be broken."[2] To Origen the symbol or shadow had a real connection with the substance; the one drew the other after

[1] *De Lapsis*, 26.

[2] In *Matt.*, *Com. Series*, 85. Origen says that there was a κουοτέρα ἐκδοχή (he does not mean more prevalent, but more common in the sense of vulgar) which was held by the ἁπλούστεροι (in *Joann.* xxxii. 16). The "simpler" probably held the view of Cyprian, for in another place, in *Matt.* xi. 14 (Lomm. iii. p. 107), Origen says that what profits the worthy recipient is, not the ὕλη, but the prayer (λόγος, as in Justin and Irenæus) which is uttered over it. It is to be presumed, therefore, that the simpler brethren held that it was the ὕλη which profited. Σῶμα ἅγιόν τι he calls the Bread in *Cont. Celsum*, viii. 33—*a kind* of holy Body = *figura corporis*. Like many other commentators upon this passage, Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, p. 201, omits the little word τι, which, little as it is, makes a great difference in the meaning.

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it; the symbol was a *signum*, but an *efficax signum*.[1] His view is that of Tertullian, that of Hooker. Now it is to be observed that some of Origen's speculations were strongly repudiated by the Church. But you will not find that even his sharpest and most hostile critics ever charged him with irreverence or error in this respect.

I will not pursue the investigation any further; it would take much too long. But now let me repeat what I have already said. I am not arguing that any of these doctors was right, or that any was wrong. That is not my business. What I maintain is, that all these views were current in the primitive Church; that men were not bound to any definite doctrine, that no one was exposed to penalties, or even to reproach, because he did not use exactly the same language or think in exactly the same way as others. Further, these differences of opinion had no effect upon ritual. It is most important to bear this

[1] It has been maintained (see, for instance, Batiffol, *L'Eucharistie*, p. 198) that in the mind of the ancient Fathers the symbol, in a sense, *was* the reality. So indeed it was, but not in that sense which M. Batiffol requires. To heathen Platonists a statue is the symbol of the god, a lyre of the beloved person who once played upon it. The symbol gives us a lively sense of the presence of the person symbolised. Origen gives the word a deeper sense. The grain of mustard seed is a symbol of the Kingdom of Heaven; both are works of the same divine mind, and if we knew all about the seed we should know all about God, and all about His other works. Compare Tennyson's "flower in the crannied wall." So in the Epistle to the Hebrews Melchisedech is a symbol of Christ, but he is not Christ. Always there is a real connection between type and antitype, but to a Platonist the connection is real, precisely because it is ideal. Tertullian was a Stoic materialist, and in his view the *figura* could not possibly be the thing figured.

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in mind. No man thought that a vestment or a ceremony bound him to any precise definition of sacramental virtue. The great Liturgies appeared, practically in their present shape, in the fourth century; they had been moulded by men whose views about the Eucharist differed quite as widely as those which were fought for in the sixteenth century.

We know how all the trouble came about. This terrible strife, which caused so much torture and bloodshed, all sprang from a definition, a definition enforced by the temporal power. Now, was not that definition a great misfortune, not to say a great crime? May we not think that the direst offence a man can commit against the unity of the Church is to define what God has not defined, and to restrict Christian liberty by adding to the conditions of salvation?

It is always dangerous to confuse the provinces of opinion and knowledge. Even in our own minds it is a moral duty to avoid this error. If there is anything about which we are not certain, we ought not to pretend that it is otherwise; for this is intellectual dishonesty. The next degree of aberration is to persuade yourself that what is uncertain is certain; and this is superstition. The third and worst is to bind these false certainties by penalties of any kind on the consciences of other men; this is tyranny.

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In the sixteenth century all parties were guilty of these offences, Calvin and Luther as well as the Pope. We need not inquire nicely into the degrees of culpability, though there were degrees, nor need we ask who began the evil game. But if there is one thing absolutely certain it is this, that there will be no reunion of Christendom until every man is left in undisturbed possession of that liberty which the New Testament guarantees to him. There will be different ideas as to what that liberty comprises; but it is certainly very wide, and in doubtful cases the presumption is always in favour of freedom, not against it. Because, though freedom is not a good thing in itself and absolutely, it is yet the indispensable condition of all human excellence.

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VIII

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.—II

THE next step in our review carries us on to the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth and the great names of John Jewel and Richard Hooker. These two held a foremost place among the doctors of the Anglican Church. Both of them exhibit in a high degree those qualities which have always been characteristic of the best Englishmen, love of freedom, respect for law, clearness of thought, the historical and judicial frame of mind. While they and their fellows were laying the foundation of religious liberty other like-minded men were creating the Elizabethan literature, spreading commerce, establishing the navy, asserting the authority of Parliament. It seems impossible to deny a connection between these two series of changes. While the world had been in its nonage, but partially emerged from the shell of barbarism, the mediæval system had rendered admirable service to humanity. But the time had come when the autocracy of the nursery was no longer salutary. The tutor and governor had done his work, so far as such work can ever be done.

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Jewel belonged to the first generation of reformers. Born in Devonshire in 1522, the year after that in which Henry VIII. earned the title of Defender of the Faith by his treatise upon the Seven Sacraments, he was sent up to Oxford at the age of thirteen. He entered at Merton, but removed in 1539 to Corpus, where he passed fourteen blameless and laborious years as scholar and fellow. At the beginning of Edward's reign he attached himself to Peter Martyr, then appointed Regius Professor of Divinity, attended his lectures, and acted as his amanuensis in the public disputation held in the schools in 1549 upon the subject of the Presence in the Eucharist. On the accession of Queen Mary he was turned out of Corpus, but still stayed on in Oxford till he was "caught by the Inquisition," and compelled to sign a recantation of his Protestant beliefs. Even this submission would not have saved his life; the hounds were laid upon his track again, and he found it necessary to fly the country, at first to Frankfort, thence upon the invitation of Martyr to Strassburg. Finally, Martyr being appointed Hebrew Lecturer at Zürich, Jewel accompanied him thither, and there remained until the accession of Elizabeth opened the door for his return. In 1560 he became Bishop of Salisbury, and in that position died in 1571, leaving behind him the highest reputation for learning, diligence, and sanctity.

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I do not know that any one has borne hardly upon Jewel for his act of weakness. But some modern critics count up with rather malicious accuracy the number of those poor creatures who in Henry's reign recanted before they were burned. It is barbarous to speak of these sufferers with anything but the greatest tenderness. What we ought to notice is that even Decius and Diocletian were not so cruel as Stokesley and his brethren: those who in their heathen courts denied Christ were suffered to go free. It was reserved for these ecclesiastics first to drive men to perjury, and then to murder them with that guilt upon their consciences. Lord Acton's condemnation of these atrocities is not at all exaggerated, and, if we are to say that Bonner and his gang were no worse than other men at that time, we must also say that the spirit of Antichrist was at that time abroad.

It is surprising that any one who had suffered such indignity in person should retain any moderation of judgment. But Jewel was a moderate man. His learning led him to the conclusion that no form of ecclesiastical government was essential, though he would not have admitted that all were equally good. He disliked vestments, but he regarded the dress of the minister as indifferent, was content that it should be regulated by law, and would not be drawn into the unhappy ritualist controversy which

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caused so much trouble in the early years of Queen Elizabeth. He did not like the crucifix in the royal chapel, but was not inclined to make an uproar about this either. He did not like Knox, and speaks with disapproval of his "Scythian" methods of reform. He was much attached to Peter Martyr, deeply grateful for the shelter which he received at Zürich, and willing to repay the debt to the utmost of his power. But Martyr was anxious to be restored to his dignities in Oxford, and Jewel dissuaded him from the thought of return. Martyr is said to have had a fiery Italian temper, and Jewel probably knew that they would agree better with the sea between them. The late Bishop of London used to say that nothing showed the value of Episcopacy better than the way in which the Elizabethan bishops were steadied by their responsibilities, and the remark is just. But Jewel wanted very little steadying; his opinions were always scholarly, well grounded, and sober.

But what I desire to speak about in particular is his famous Challenge. It grew out of the abortive Westminster colloquy. It was first uttered in a sermon at St. Paul's Cross in November 1559, repeated and amplified in a sermon preached before the Court in 1560, took book shape as the *Defence of the Church of England* in 1565, and in 1569, assumed its final development as the *Apology for*

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the Defence. It remains as the worthy monument of Jewel's learning, and as the first masterpiece of properly English theology. Jewel had begun by raising in the main three questions, the position of the Bishop of Rome, prayer in a strange tongue, and the Roman Mass. "If any man alive," he says, "were able to prove any one of these articles by any one clear or plain clause or sentence either of the Scriptures, or of the old Doctors, or of any old general councils, or by any example of the Primitive Church, I promised that I would then give over and subscribe unto him." By the Primitive Church he meant the Church of the first six centuries.

The challenge was taken up by Cole and Harding, but Jewel remained master of the lists, and those are not mistaken who hold that his arguments were conclusive at the time and have not been shaken since. If you read Bishop Lightfoot or any other modern scholar, you will find that none of Jewel's contentions have been seriously modified. He knew the facts of Church history pretty nearly as well as we know them now, and he does not misstate the facts.

And yet we must sadly admit that this solid and cogent investigation has produced very little result. Now what is the reason of that? It is not that the *Apology for the Defence* is dry, for, considering that Jewel is a controversial theologian, he is far from

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dry; neither is it that he is learned, for after all the question with which he deals can only be solved by erudition. Can we see then what is the reason?

Now, you will see first of all that Jewel limits the points included in his challenge. This is indeed of not much importance, for the points selected are all cardinal, and, if they had been conceded, his case would have been gained. But he limits also the time included in his survey. He speaks of the first six centuries; others speak of the first five. Those who like Jewel took the six centuries as the norm of catholicity were thinking of the conversion of England; they were maintaining that Romanism proper did not exist at the time when our forefathers became Christian. Those who selected the five were thinking of the definitions of the four great Councils, which they had not the slightest desire to impugn. Again, and this is the real crux, Jewel limits the kind of evidence that he will admit. Show me, he says in effect, that any one of the doctrines for which you are burning Protestants is clearly expressed in Scripture, or taught by unanimous consent of doctors, or defined by the whole Church in a council, and I will give in. Well, that seems unanswerable, and yet it was answered in a way—let us see how.

The Council of Trent, when it proceeded to re-

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enact that definition of the Eucharist which had been sanctioned for the first time in the thirteenth century by the Lateran Synod, protest that they are merely stating a belief which has always been held by the Catholic Church, in conformity with the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, and in obedience to the Holy Spirit who guides her day by day into all truth—*a Spiritu sanctu illi omnem veritatem in dies suggerente.* The first clause is, of course, untrue; it is the second that enabled Harding and others after him to slip out of Jewel's noose. Permit me to expand this point, which is of the utmost importance.

Jewel was perfectly well aware, as was Archbishop Usher after him, that every peculiarity of the Roman system could be traced back through a long period of expansion of which the first manifestations lie within the six centuries. Men do not sit down and create a new doctrine with a stroke of the pen. Great beliefs, whether right or wrong, grow like trees, and the first stages of their germination are underground.

Take, for instance, the last great dogma of the Papal Infallibility. The claim was first expressly made at the Council of Sardica in 343; it was a purely Western Council, and it conferred upon the Bishop of Rome the right of final appeal. In less than eighty years, whether by ignorance or fraud,

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the canons of Sardica came to be regarded at Rome as canons of the first great Ecumenical Council of Nicæa, and were quoted as such by Pope Zosimus, in a famous case in which he claimed the right to hear an appeal against a decision of the Church of Africa.[1] This was the beginning of a long series of forgeries and interpolations, the history of which may be read in *Janus*. The reply of the Eastern Church was given in the canons of Constantinople and Chalcedon, but these the Pope refused to acknowledge, thus planting himself above the decrees of General Councils. It may be said, therefore, that even then, in the fourth and fifth centuries, there was a party in the West which was quite prepared to accept the *Vaticanum*.

Let us turn back to the penultimate Roman dogma, that of the Immaculate Conception. As early as the second century, in some form or another, the apocryphal Gospels were current. They may have been Gnostic in their origin; they may have been vulgar Christian; they may be, in their present shape, Christian adaptations of Gnostic originals. But they found many readers within the Church, and even learned men thought that they contained fragments of information not to be found in the canonical Gospels, and all the more valuable on that account. Everybody knows the kind of miracle attributed in

[1] The case of Apiarius. See Coustant, *Epp. Pon. Rom. Genuinæ*; Zosimus, No. 15.

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these documents to the infant Saviour, how He struck dead a playmate who had interfered with His sport, a schoolmaster who had ventured to reprimand Him. But there is a corollary to these dreadful tales which has not, perhaps, been so generally observed. It is this, that no one could venture to approach this terrible child without a proper introduction from His Mother. Only she could shield men from the lightnings which might at any time flash forth from her Son. No one who reads these strange documents can doubt that their readers and admirers believed in the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin. Later on, in the third or fourth century appeared another group of writings, the *Transitus* or *Dormitio Mariæ*, in which the story of the miraculous Assumption is told at length. These treatises were at first repudiated as heretical, and attributed to the Gnostics, but they soon overcame this feeling. They were fathered upon orthodox authors, and a whole string of forgeries was concocted for this purpose. Finally, just about the close of the sixth century, the Festival of the Assumption was established in the East, and gradually found its way into the West also.

As to Transubstantiation I have already said quite enough. The actual definition belongs to the thirteenth century, but the idea, or at any rate an idea so like it that it is hardly worth while to split

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hairs on the subject, may be traced, here and there, as early as the latter part of the second century.

Much the same thing is true of other beliefs and practices which Jewel and his friends would have condemned. In some shape or another, more or less definite, more or less universal, you may easily find within the limit of the six centuries the doctrine of human merit, and of works of supererogation, the belief in purgatory, masses for the dead, pictures in churches, the ritual use of incense, the most credulous belief in the efficacy of relics, extravagant language on the subject of saints and martyrs, dislike of clerical marriage and repeated attempts to restrict it, and monastic vows. It is a delusion to think that the Church of Luther, Calvin, or Jewel was the Church of the first six centuries. They themselves knew that it was not so. It was not possible for any learning or sincerity to reproduce that vanished age. Very fortunately it was not possible. It was an age of growing barbarism and ignorance, and there can be no more convincing proof of the inherent vitality of Christianity than the fact that it survived, on the whole unspoiled, through the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.

But now we must ask how this extraordinary pullulation of beliefs and usages affects the argument of Jewel? Very little indeed if you accept his premisses. He would have said: "I can show you the

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date of all these novelties. This one comes from the third century, this from the sixth, this from a later period still. Now whatever can be shown to be later than the time of our Lord and His apostles, and not to be a direct, reasonable inference from their teaching, is clearly a human invention, which cannot be binding upon any Christian man, and must be judged, as all other human inventions are, by the light of the human intelligence." In other words, no development can express a necessary truth; the Church cannot make certain what God has left uncertain. Now this is precisely what was denied, and, as here we pass quite outside the field of history or argument, you will see at once why the dispute is interminable, and why neither Jewel nor Harding could satisfy anybody that was not satisfied already.

It is most difficult to state the Roman view of development. Everybody puts it differently, and the reason is that it is in itself so vague and nebulous that it wears a different shape to each beholder.

It was a logical weapon, manufactured, I do not know by whom, in the sixteenth century,[1] in order to parry the constant appeal of Protestants to the language of Scripture. It was used by Henry VIII. in his *Defence of the Seven Sacraments*, and the burly

[1] It may be traced earlier than this. Duns Scotus, in 1 *Sent. d.* ii. *q.* 1, argues that Basil and others were not heretics for not holding the *filioque*. But, he goes on, the article is of the substance of faith from the moment of its definition. This is exactly the position of Petavius.

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king with characteristic audacity presents the argument in its naked simplicity. Why, he asks, should not Luther allow that, "that has been revealed to the Church, which before was unknown?" According to Henry a development is a new revelation, against which it would be idle to quote any passage from the Bible. Very much the same was the opinion of Pighius, a well-known controversialist of the time, whom Jewel quotes as saying, that "No man is allowed to believe anything on the authority of any Scripture, however clear and evident it may be in our judgment, against the clear and consonant opinion of orthodox Fathers, and against the common definition of the Church." On this view the Bible really disappears where the Fathers agree and the Church has defined.

The Council of Trent would not allow that on the questions then in dispute there was any divergence of opinion between the three authorities. According to them the doctrine of transubstantiation had always been the belief of the Church, and had been clearly taught by Christ and His apostles, but, after this strong affirmation, a reference is slipped in to the Holy Spirit, who from day to day suggests to the Church all truth. Here we are led to ask what is the precise relation between these suggestions, the written word, and the teaching of the older Fathers in any given case; and the answer is by no means clear.

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Early in the seventeenth century the learned Jesuit Petau observed that nearly all the ancient Fathers used phrases which, after Nicæa, would have been regarded as Arian, and that some of them held beliefs, as, for instance, that of the pre-existence of the soul, which were afterwards condemned. He comforts himself and his readers with the observation that the Church had not as yet decided upon these points, and that therefore the writers were not heretics. Here we ask what has become of the clear and consonant opinion of orthodox Fathers? or rather, when a Father becomes orthodox?

On December 10, 1854, Pius IX. issued a bull declaring that the Immaculate Conception "has been revealed by God." There is no reference to Scripture, or to the Fathers, and the doctrine appears to rest entirely upon a new revelation. Indeed it cannot be defended in any other way. Yet it has never been expressly asserted that the definitions of the Roman Church need no foundation in Scripture at all,[1] and this was, we may suppose, the reason why the Abbé Loisy was put to silence; for his extravagant criticism resolved even the Gospels into tradition, and cut away all documentary support from the tenets which he proposed to defend. Yet it is not easy to see how

[1] The general official view is, I suppose, still that of Bellarmine: "Non potest aliquid certum esse certitudine fidei, nisi aut immediate contineatur in verbo Dei, aut ex verbo Dei per evidentem consequentiam deducatur," *De justif.* iii. 8, 1. I borrow this quotation from Laud, *Against Fisher.*

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the Abbé Loisy differed in principle from Pope Pius IX.

Well, now, what are we to say about all this? You may read the elaborate defence of Development given by Möhler in his *Symbolism*, or that construction of the doctrine which satisfied Newman and enabled him to cut himself adrift from the Church of his fathers. You may read also elaborate attacks upon it by Dr. Mozley and others. But I do not think you will succeed in getting the thing much clearer. You will still find it hard to understand why one who was an irreproachable Christian in November 1854 became a heretic before New Year's Day, though he had not changed his belief or his conduct in the brief interval in any way whatever.

But enough has been said to show why Jewel's challenge had little practical result. He was appealing to reason and to history, and his adversaries flouted both. Harding merely answered that he was a blasphemer. Harding was not a civil man, but he was only expressing in his insolent way what is after all—put it how you will—the opinion of his side. For it is quite clear that we are here standing upon the brink of one of those gulfs which no argument can bridge. Has God been pleased to add to the revelation vouchsafed to us in the New Testament? Has the Church received power to enact new terms of salvation? You can only answer these questions by a plain Yes or

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No, and something other than logic will prompt your answer.[1] The answer of Jewel and our Church is given in the Sixth Article—"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation"; and I do not think it doubtful that, down to a certain point which cannot be very positively fixed, but which certainly lies after the date of the great Councils, all Christendom would have said the same thing.

Richard Hooker was one of many promising scholars who owed help and encouragement to Jewel. On one occasion, while an undergraduate at Corpus, Jewel's own college, he travelled on foot, according to the custom of poor students in those days, from Oxford to Exeter to visit his mother, and took Salisbury in his way purposely to see the good bishop. Jewel "gave him good counsel and his benediction, but forgot to give him money; which, when the bishop had considered, he sent a servant in all haste to call Richard back to him; and at Richard's return, the bishop said to him, Richard, I sent for you back to lend you a horse which hath carried me many a mile,

[1] Perhaps the best instance, after all, is that decree of the Council of Trent which directs that the Vulgate "pro authentica habeatur." It involves a double claim. The Church, as such, decides infallibly (1) upon the text of the original, (2) upon the correctness of the translation. Why, then, is the text of the Hebrew and of the Greek still in part uncertain? and why are there faults in the Vulgate? Why, again, have "heretical" scholars, such as Tischendorf or Westcott, been able to contribute towards the emendation of the text? Critical scholarship, astronomy, chemistry, are no doubt included in the promise to "guide into all truth." But to whom is that promise given? by what means is it fulfilled? and is the Church teacher or learner in all that is not explicitly revealed?

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and, I thank God, with much ease, and presently delivered into his hand a walking staff, with which he professed he had travelled through many parts of Germany." He also gave him ten groats for himself, ten others for his mother, and promised him ten more when he "brought the horse back again."

Hooker was born about 1553, and was an infant when Elizabeth mounted the throne. He had never been obliged to fly for his life and tramp from Antwerp to Frankfort, from Frankfort to Strassburg, from Strassburg to Zürich, depending for his daily bread upon the charity of men of a strange race, with the memory of an enforced denial rankling in his soul. He had not the same reason for disliking the Romanists. On the other hand, he had never been brought into friendly personal relations with the foreign reformers. He knew these eminent men only as he saw their principles embodied in the English Puritans. Hooker had small reason to love these men. They drove him out of the Mastership of the Temple, they nearly broke his heart by slanders of the vilest description, and finally with the help, or connivance, of that intolerable fool, his wife, they destroyed the finished copy of the last three books of his *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

Perhaps the most beautiful and characteristic passage in the life of Hooker is that which Walton records as the closing scene. On the last day of all

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as he lay "deep in contemplation and not inclinable to discourse," his friends, anxious to gather up the last drop of honey from that precious soul, ventured to ask him of what he was thinking. He replied "that he was meditating the number and nature of angels, and their blessed obedience and order, without which peace could not be in heaven; and, oh, that it might be so upon earth." That great thought which is so nobly expanded in his First Book—the thought of divine, eternal, all-pervading law—in which all art, all beauty, all science, all statecraft, all religion meet and blend like the hues of the rainbow, which is the harmonious sum of all that is, and all that can be conceived by the many-sided intelligence of man, which is loveliness, and wisdom, and power, and charity, and peace—this was the last theme of his contemplation, as it had been the first. He had little peace upon earth, least of all where he most needed and ought most surely to have found it, by his own fireside. Perhaps he was too meek and gentle, if that is possible. He was no match for Travers or Cartwright in the rough-and-tumble of popular debate, and even for the pulpit he was too good, just as Burke was too good for the House of Commons. People sometimes speak of him as having a faint flavour of Geneva about him, as not quite deep or subtle enough for the present taste. But there is none of our religious thinkers whom you can place upon the same level, unless it

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be Butler, whose excellence is of another kind. And you would not easily find the equal of either of these great men in any other Church.

It is difficult even after the lapse of three centuries to judge the Puritans fairly. Much depends upon whether we take the political or the ecclesiastical point of view. We may say that Puritanism marks the first appearance upon the stage of the Radical Party. We owe much to that party, but in the reign of Queen Elizabeth it was, with the exception of a small body of clergymen, almost wholly uneducated, and, with no exception at all, destitute of political responsibility and therefore of political sense. Further, they had been deeply stirred by the horrors of the Marian persecution. The movement was at first wholly religious, because it could not be political; it was exaggerated, narrow, headstrong, coarse, and violent, because it was uneducated. It can hardly be doubted that the influence of men so wise and good as Hooker would have prevailed, if time had been allowed for the leaven to work. Unhappily, Elizabeth was succeeded by the house of Stuart, who were one and all of them weak despots, the very worst thing that a sovereign can be, men who knew neither how to master nor how to yield. The consequence was that dissent identified itself with the national protest against misgovernment. Religion on both sides became political, and the evil results of this

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degradation of the spiritual life are to be seen amongst us at the present day.

The Puritans were exceedingly tiresome about the vestments. The surplice, the cope, the grey amice, the rochet (the alb and chasuble do not appear) were disliked even by Jewel, and were in the eyes of many as the abomination of desolation. Even the square cap, so familiar in the streets of Oxford, was made a great grievance. Sampson gave up the Deanery of Christ Church rather than pollute his head with one, and the enforcement of the moderate compromise formulated in the Advertisements led to "the earliest deliberate and organised separation of Puritans from the Church of England." All this we might call incredibly foolish, if the events of the last thirty years did not teach us that the spirit of Dean Sampson exists upon the other side also, and that it is wise to avoid exasperating language. But the Vestiarian controversy led on inevitably to an attack upon Episcopacy. Travers and Cartwright, the opponents of Hooker, wanted to establish the discipline.[1] They believed in the Apostolical Succession (in a limited sense) of the priesthood, and would have allowed the bishop to remain as senior priest, as chairman and moderator of the presbyteral synod. Scripture they said, "alloweth a bishop but

[1] The position of the Puritans is admirably described in the Bishop of Oxford's *Introduction to the Fifth Book of Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.*

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not a lord bishop." Others would have abolished Orders, in the ancient sense of the word, altogether. At the same time Hadrian Saravia, a wandering Spaniard, who had drifted from the Low Countries into England and obtained a prebend at Canterbury, was teaching that without the true Episcopal succession there can be no sacraments and no Church. Here, then, we have the battle set in array upon a very serious point. According to Saravia and his disciples, who soon became very numerous, all who have discarded the Episcopal succession—Lutherans, Calvinists, Zwinglians, Huguenots, English Separatists—have thereby unchurched themselves, and are no longer Christians. Let us cast a glance upon the history of this question.

Tyndale,[1] the translator, whom we may take as a type of the earlier English Protestants, does not deny that bishops, priests, and deacons were ordained by the Apostles, following the commandment of the Lord. He held that bishop and priest were originally indistinguishable in name and office, and that it was the business of the priest or elder to minister the sacraments. The mediatorial function of the priest he denies. As to ordination he says: "Neither is there any other manner or ceremony at all required in making of our spiritual officers, than to choose an able person, and then to rehearse

[1] See the Parker Society's edition of his *Doctrinal Treatises*.

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him in his duty and give him his charge, and so to put him in his room."

Cranmer[1] in 1543 propounded two questions for consideration by the bishops. The first is whether bishops or priests were first, and, if the priests were first, whether the priests made the bishops. The second is whether, if it so fortuned that all the bishops and priests of a realm were dead, the king of that realm should make bishops and priests. To the latter he answered that the king could do so. He meant that, though Orders are generally necessary, yet in the case of some peculiar emergency—for instance, in the case of a company of laymen left isolated upon an island in the middle of the sea for some considerable lapse of time—they need not be compelled to abstain from the use of the sacraments.

Jewel held that priest and bishop were originally the same, accepts Tertullian's dictum, *ubi tres sunt Ecclesia est licet laici*, and argues that, by the Gospel and by the usage of the Church of Rome, a layman may absolve.

Hooker, in the unfinished Seventh Book, reviews the evidence, and concludes: "Wherefore let us not fear to be herein bold and peremptory, that if anything in the Church's government, surely the first institution

[1] Strype, *Mem. of Cranmer*, ii. p. 744; Dixon, ii. 307. Tyndale had maintained that if a woman were cast upon a heathen island she might not only baptize and preach but minister the Eucharist; *Answer to More*, Parker Society, p. 18.

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of bishops was from heaven, was even of God, the Holy Ghost was the author of it." Whether he meant by these strong words that Episcopacy belonged to the *esse* or merely to the *bene esse* of the Church is not absolutely clear; but he was on intimate terms with Saravia, who is said to have been his confessor.

In the next generation the question continued to form the dividing line between high and low Anglicanism. Archbishop Usher writes: "I do profess that with the like affection I should receive the blessed Sacrament at the hands of the Dutch ministers, if I were in Holland, as I should do at the hands of the French ministers, if I were at Charenton."[1] He was a strong upholder of Episcopacy, but he held that there was no difference *in specie* between bishop and priest, and he adds that "the agreement or disagreement in radical and fundamental doctrines, not the consonancy or dissonancy in the particular points of ecclesiastical government, is with me (and I hope with every man that mindeth peace) the rule of adhering to, or of receding from, the communion of any Church." For this Peter Heylin blamed him, but there were many good bishops who agreed with Usher.

Since the discovery of the *Didache* these questions have again been very copiously debated. I need

[1] Parr's *Life of Usher*, appendix, p. 5.

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not entangle you too deeply in details; a bare summary of opinions must suffice. Scholars are not agreed whether Episcopacy grew up out of the presbyterate, or whether it existed from the first in some districts and spread from them over the whole Church. The first is the view of St. Jerome, the second is that of Theodore of Mopsuestia. They are not agreed again as to the presbyterate itself. Some think it was original and universal; some that the charismatic ministry was the first; some that the two forms existed for a time side by side. The present Bishop of Salisbury writes in his book upon *The Holy Communion* that the direction of the Eucharist "seems in quite the earliest times to have been more specially the duty of the apostolic, prophetic, or missionary officers of the Church—those in fact who had special *charismata* or spiritual gifts—and from them to have passed naturally to the local and permanent ministry," and this is probably very much what his predecessor Jewel would have said, if he had been alive at the present day. Upon the whole it may be concluded that the old Puritan view, based upon the Pauline Epistles, on Tertullian and on St. Jerome, is still tenable, and that, in spite of all the efforts of modern scholarship, absolute certainty on this question of primitive Church government has not been attained.

But now, if the Bishop of Salisbury is right, it

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follows that the Church has changed its ministry, and from this it follows that the ministry derives its commission, not directly from God, but directly from the Church and only indirectly from God. Further does it not follow that, if the Church, possessing as she does the fulness of Christ, has made one change in her polity, she could also by the same authority make another? If the historical premiss is not absolutely certain, the conclusion must share in this uncertainty; we cannot push it with perfect confidence either in the one direction or in the other.

It is certain that Tertullian and Jerome regarded the difference between bishop and presbyter as resting entirely upon the law of the Church, and a high authority, Dr. Maitland, tells us that, throughout the Middle Ages, "every student of canon law knew the doctrine that the prelacy of bishops is founded not on divine command, but on a custom of the Church." Prelacy would not cease to be divinely ordered on this account, for the Church herself is divine. But it would cease to be a matter of eternal obligation. In the monastic church of Nitria in Egypt, in the fourth century, there was a college of eight presbyters, of whom only one was allowed to officiate.[1] It is possible to suppose that this had been the universal usage. Such a senior priest would be a sort of provost or dean, and we can

[1] *Hist. Lausiaca*, vii.; ed. Butler.

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very well understand how he might turn into a bishop quite easily and imperceptibly. Nothing would be wanted but a special act of consecration, and the introduction of this would attract little notice, for it would make no difference in the position or power of the dean. For my own part, I should say that the Puritan contention was weak as regards the presbyter, and strong, though not conclusive, as to the bishop. It is not easy to see how the gifted layman can have been ousted by the commissioned minister without vehement protests, which could not have failed to leave traces in Church history, and not a sign of such a struggle can be found. But the bishop has always been so like the presbyter that he may quite well have been for some time distinguished from him only by authority and not by ordination.

In any case, the opinion of Jewel and Usher was as considerable as that of Bishop Lightfoot, and it is unfortunate that the doctrine of Saravia, which is certainly not more considerable, if it is not less so, should have been seized upon and set to work under a full head of steam at a time when tact and consideration were so urgently called for.

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IX

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.—III

FULLER notes that at the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign Puritanism had laid aside much of its contentiousness. "Great at this time was the calm in the English Church, the brethren not endeavouring anything in opposition to the hierarchy." Even Cartwright, who had been so bitter, was now comfortably settled as Master of the Leicester Hospital at Warwick, and treated Whitgift with great respect, preaching "very temperately according to his promise made to the archbishop." He passed away shortly afterwards, and is said to have lamented seriously upon his deathbed "the unnecessary troubles he had caused in the Church by the schism he had been the great fomenter of; and wished he was to begin his life again, that he might testify to the world the dislike he had of his former ways. And in this opinion he died." These men, no doubt, were carried too far by their hatred of papal tyranny, but they had good reason for their fierceness. They had lived in the days of Queen Mary. Since then they had heard of the sentence of excommunication and

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deposition pronounced against Queen Elizabeth, of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and of its solemn approval by Gregory XIII. They had heard also of a series of plots for the assassination of the Queen, which were undoubtedly sanctioned by the Pope. Finally, the Armada had burned in upon their minds the reality and imminence of the peril.

The peril was so frightful that it may very well have drawn all the more reasonable men to acquiesce in a system of Church government which was after all not intolerable. Cartwright's brother-in-law, Stubbs, had suffered the loss of a hand for his outspoken comments on the proposed marriage between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou. "Towards his old age he was afflicted with many infirmities, insomuch that he was forced continually to study upon his knees." That is a beautiful picture; and this stalwart old Puritan, though he may have been sour enough on some points, must yet have had a great store of sweetness also in his nature.

That Fuller was right, and that things were really quieting down, we may infer from the failure of the attempt to stir up Predestinarianism into a blaze.[1] In 1595 two of the Cambridge divinity professors, having nothing better to do, plunged into dispute about this abysmal problem, and Barret, an excit-

[1] On the unlucky business of the Lambeth Articles, see Fuller, Strype, and Hook.

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able Fellow of Gonville and Caius, struck in with a sermon, in which he spoke against the absolute decree of reprobation, and reflected with very unhandsome terms upon the late reformers of religion, Calvin, Peter Martyr, and others. The vice-chancellor and heads took the matter up with great warmth, and requested the archbishop to interfere. Whitgift at first declined to do so, but the Cambridge authorities insisted with such vehemence that he weakly gave way, and by a committee of divines meeting at his house, the nine Articles of Lambeth were drawn up. They included as their chief point the assertion of the absolute decree of reprobation. They were only intended for use at Cambridge, but the archbishop's approval and the names of the dignitaries who had sat upon the committee would have given them a reach extending far beyond this immediate purpose. Clearly they were against the law, and formed a serious and highly objectionable addition to the Thirty-nine Articles. The Queen threatened Whitgift with a *præmunire*, perhaps more in jest than in earnest, but Tudor jests were more to be dreaded than the earnest of other people, and he made haste to withdraw his ill-considered move. At the Hampton Court Conference Dr. Reynolds suggested that "it would do very well if the nine orthodoxal Articles concluded on at Lambeth might be inserted into the Book of Articles," but King

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James would not have the question raised, and the suggestion was not pressed. The English divines who attended the Synod of Dort[1] in 1618 were commissioned to play the part of friendly moderators. They were shocked by the violence of Gomarus, the leader of the Contra-Remonstrant party, who said "that no man taught that God absolutely decreed to cast man away without sin: but, as He did decree the end, so did He decree the means; that is, as He predestinated man to death, so He predestinated him to sin, the only way to death." They were not attracted by the opposite doctrine of the Arminians, that the elect are predestined to life *ex prævisis meritis*, a form which implies, though it shrinks from asserting, that the lost are predestined *ex prævisis delictis*, and is not essentially different from the dreadful belief of Gomarus. They would not admit that Christ did not die for all men, or that all men ought not to be prayed for. This was in fact the point upon which they insisted. "For the universality of the promises of the Gospel" (which is denied in the second of the Dort Articles), "the Church of England doth teach in the seventeenth Article of Predestination that we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth for us in Holy Scripture; where our Church doth signify

[1] What follows about the Synod of Dort is taken from the *Golden Remains* of Hales of Eton, who was present.

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that the promises of God in the Gospel do appertain to all generally to whom they are published, and according to these we hold that the reason why the promises of the Gospel are not effectual to all to whom they are published is not through any defect in Christ's death . . . but that the defect is inherent in man, who will not receive that grace that is truly and seriously offered on God's part." These are the words of Davenant, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. With this large exception as to the second, the English divines approved of the five Articles of Dort. In this no doubt they were straining the doctrine of their own Church in the Dutch direction, and indeed they were not unaware of this, for Davenant adds, "we know that sundry of the most learned bishops and others in England do hold the same." Sundry—but he does not say all, nor even the greater part.

The doctrine of Dort and of the Lambeth Articles is commonly spoken of as Calvinism, but we should not forget that behind it lies the authority of St. Augustine, of St. Thomas Aquinas, of a large array of philosophers, and some very strong passages of Scripture.

There is one remark that ought perhaps to be made. You will find the doctrine of St. Augustine best, not in the anti-Pelagian treatises, but in the *Confessions*. As that great saint looked back over the strange experiences by which he had been led

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into the bosom of the Church, he saw that he had been guided all along by the hand of God. But how? Not by the imposition of a command from above, but by the awakening of something within his own breast. First of emotion, when his dearly loved college friend was snatched from his side by death: at this time he asked what love meant, and saw that the Manichees, with their belief in an evil creation, could not explain it; then of intelligence, when he discovered that the Manichees could not account for eclipses, though they had their own foolish theory about them, while Greek science could; then of the power of Christian fellowship, when he saw the outburst of loyal affection towards St. Ambrose, evoked by the oppression of that saint by the Empress Justina. And finally to this something, to this gradual awakening of his whole better nature, he ascribed as cause the Love of God, and the responding Love of Man.

To St. Augustine, grace is love, which is natural to man, which he cannot but hear, if only he will turn towards the music. If he will but turn his face, he must be drawn. Now the Predestinarians of the sixteenth century were not thinking of the love, but of the power and of the omniscience of God. Thus grace becomes an arbitrary decree, as of some Oriental sultan, who chooses his servants because he will and as he will.

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There is a vast difference between these two modes of conception, and St. Augustine's way is far the better. Yet after all we come to the same goal. Love itself is given. No man can say, I will love; we do not say that even of the women whom we take for our wives.

What then is the way of escape? There is none known to logic, because logic is confined to a lower sphere. But undoubtedly Davenant had a right to appeal to the general promises of God. What then was the fault of the extreme Puritans? It was not that they were Augustinians or Calvinists: it was that they wanted to do exactly what the Romans were doing, that is to say, to bind an uncertain opinion upon the consciences of all men. People said that they forsook the *via media;* but that is not a good phrase. What the Church of England has done—its great service to catholicity—is to insist upon the certain, and to leave the uncertain to the judgment of the individual. There is nothing middling, or eclectic, or timid, or lukewarm about this position. It is no mere rope-dancer's trick, as Newman tried to make out. It is the way of common-sense and true piety. It is a middle way, if you like to call it so, but we do not get at it by so regarding it. A man does not attain true courage by taking a little cowardice and a little foolhardiness and mixing them together; he obeys the law of

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right, and then finds he is neither a fool nor a coward.

I need not dwell upon the Westminster Confession, or explain at length how the interminable dispute about the five Articles of Dort led to Quakerism and George Fox.

What strikes us now is the madness of the whole thing. It has died down, because it was so mad, and it would have died down in the reigns of James and Charles, if it had not been fanned and blown into a blaze by incessant provocations, by the Gunpowder Plot, and the Spanish and French matches, by the sight of Romish proselytisers, like Sir Toby Matthews, who plied their trade quite openly in defiance of the penal laws. They captured a certain number of fashionable people, the Countess of Buckingham, the notorious Lady Purbeck, the Earl of Portland; they hovered round the deathbed of King James, and were only kept out of his sick-room by Bishop Williams, who mounted guard there day and night; they were favoured and supported by the French wife of Charles. You will find an account of the correspondence of Panzani in Gardiner's history of the time, and there can be little doubt that, among what was called the Arminian party, there was a strong feeling in favour of a reunion with Rome. Laud stood firm, but Goodman, Bishop of Gloucester, went over; Mon-

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tague of Chichester trembled on the verge; Secretary Windebank and Lord Cottington dallied with temptation. Country clergymen were talking about stone altars. Anthony Stafford published a book about the Virgin, adorned with all the mediæval legends, and the poet Crashaw spoke of the Puritans in the mass as "hypocrites."

It was a state of things in many pertinent features not unlike that through which we have been passing for the last sixty years. Laud played very much the same part as Dr. Pusey, and in this aspect his services to the Church and nation were considerable.

If you want to know what a Puritan really was you cannot do better than turn to the autobiographical sketch of Richard Baxter given in the *Ecclesiastical Biography* of Christopher Wordsworth. People sometimes speak as if the Puritan spirit were less winning, less cultivated and humane, than that, for instance, of George Herbert. No doubt the Puritans were often narrow and boorish; they belonged mainly to the middle and lower classes, which in England have never been distinguished by the intellectual graces. Often, again, you find a strong infusion of bitterness; it is clearly to be found even in Milton. But all zealots are bitter; all, that is to say, who are more concerned in defending their system than in cultivating the inner spiritual life, without which their system is a barren tree. But Baxter stands in Words-

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worth's gallery among the Caroline worthies; it is easy to compare him with them, and you will find that he does not lose by the comparison. With great delicacy he combines a certain largeness and courage, a fine confidence in the power of truth, as distinct from the props and buttresses of truth. He sees the limits of our knowledge and is critical. "I must needs say with Mr. Richard Hooker," he writes, "that, whatever man may pretend, the subjective certainty cannot go beyond the objective evidence; for it is caused thereby, as the print on the wax is caused by that on the seal." Yet to this scrupulous intellectual honesty he united what many people find incompatible with it, a warm and tender faith in the great doctrines of the Gospel. In his youth he had been fond of controversy, though he never preached about it. In his age, he tells us, "the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments do find me now the most acceptable and plentiful matter for all my meditations: they are to me as my daily bread and drink. . . . And thus I observed it was with old Bishop Usher," who was another fine Puritan. "In the autumn," Baxter goes on, "the life draws down into the root . . . and so my mind may retire to the root of Christian principles." He was first attracted to religion by a book written by the Jesuit Parsons, a man of whom most people have little good to say, and he ended his life as a Nonconfor-

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mist, though he had been ordained in the Church of England. Now what was it that turned him away from his mother Church? Down to 1640 he tells us that "he had met not one Presbyterian, clergyman or lay, and but three or four nonconforming ministers." About 1635 he became acquainted with "some zealous godly nonconformists in Shrewsbury and the adjoining parts, whose fervent prayers and savoury conference and holy lives did profit me much; and, when I understood that they were persecuted by the bishops, I found much prejudice arise in my heart against them that persecuted them." He tells us that, in country places, religious people were few, and "these by the rest were called Puritans, and derided as hypocrites and precisians, that would take upon them to be holy . . . Yet not one of all them ever scrupled conformity to bishops, liturgy, or ceremonies, and it was godly conformable ministers that they went from home to hear." Probably most of the religious laity in the country were of the evangelical type, what George Fox calls "tender people," a quiet old-fashioned race, who thought a great deal about their souls, and very little about vestments or stone altars. Laud was worrying them with fines and censures, wild curates were preaching what sounded to their simple ears like Romanism, the king was driving them into rebellion by his forced loan and his ship money, and the Church, with its doctrine of passive obedience, was exhorting them to

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take cheerfully the spoiling of their goods in a Christian country. It is a lamentable scene.

Of Archbishop Laud it is impossible to speak without the highest respect. He was sincerely devout, rigidly upright, learned and munificent. Here in Oxford we have great reason for gratitude to him. He obtained for us the right to print Bibles, thereby securing the prosperity of our Press, he gave us new statutes, he enriched the Bodleian Library, he founded the Arabic professorship, he enlarged and beautified his own college of St. John's. He was liberal and enlightened, and deserves the further commendations of being eminently sensible, practical, and business-like.

His opinions—if we set aside his high doctrine of the divine right of kings and of bishops—were in no sense extravagant. He was deeply attached to the Church of England, and much of the conduct that brought disaster upon him was due to his zeal for the beauty of holiness, which is surely a high and intelligible motive. He has been called superstitious, and his *Diary* shows us with what care he noted his dreams, and the accidents that he looked upon as warnings. But if you read Aubrey's *Lives* you will not judge him hardly upon this score. It was a superstitious age. Bishop Jewel found Devonshire swarming with witches, and even Sir Isaac Newton is said to have believed at one time in alchemy.

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Laud was harsh and surly in manner, and slow to forgive those who had offended him. But his chief fault was his autocratic temper. He not only enforced the law with a rigour ill suited to the times, and indeed to his position, but he never hesitated to strain the law in what he thought the cause of right. Thus he imprisoned Sir Robert Howard, the paramour of Lady Purbeck. Parliament fined him for this excess of zeal, but he writes in his *Diary*:—"In such a case, say the punishment was more than the law allows, what may be done for honour and religion's sake?" Two of his most admirable characteristics are his absolute fearlessness and his indomitable sense of justice. If he was severe to poor men, he was equally severe to the rich. He wanted to make Lady Purbeck do public penance in a white sheet. But when unflinching rigour is combined with an insufficient respect for law, in the person of a clergyman and in troubled times, it is easy to see what breakers lie ahead.

He began his career as the favourite of a favourite, as the confidant of the worthless and fatal Buckingham. Williams, his great rival, owed his first high promotion to the same unclean hand, but offended Buckingham by giving him wise advice. Laud never gave wise advice either to Buckingham or to Charles, except in the matter of the Charter House, which Buckingham wanted to plunder. The

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misfortune was that his own nature made him a willing instrument in the hands of those who were undermining the liberties of the State. And the merit of his love for the Church of England must be qualified by the remark that he did not see how the Church could be maintained without the aid of civil tyranny.

Perhaps the best instance of his temper and methods is to be found in his behaviour towards Williams. At any rate we may take this as a sample.

John Williams was a very remarkable man. He is the last instance except Juxon of an ecclesiastic placed in high secular employment. He was a Welshman, of good family, and handsome person, widely read, not only in theology, but in history, fond of music, sociable and magnificent in his habits, what we may call a Whig in politics, and in religion rather a Puritan of the school of Jewel, Whitgift, and Usher. He was far more of a man of the world than Laud; but no one who reads Hacket's *Life* will doubt that he was religious, or that he had high principles. Professor Gardiner calls him "shifty," and Dr. Hook dislikes him immensely. He was not only a bishop, but a lawyer, who had been Lord Keeper, shrewd, ingenious, and resolute. On one occasion, as we shall see, he was driven to meet chicanery with chicanery, but not until he had exhausted all other means of defence against a malignant and cruel persecution.

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Two men so different as Laud and Williams never could have been upon cordial terms, and the circumstances of the time forced them into antagonism. They came naturally into direct conflict over the burning question—what was the proper position for the communion table? This brought into a focus all the smouldering disagreement between High Church and Low Church.

The law upon the subject is to be found in the Rubric: "The Table at the Communion time having a fair linen cloth upon it, shall stand in the body of the church or in the chancel, where Morning and Evening Prayer are appointed to be said"; in the Injunctions of 1559, "that the holy table in every church be decently made and set in the place where the altar stood . . . saving when the communion of the Sacrament is to be distributed, at which time the same shall be so placed within the chancel, as whereby the minister may be more conveniently heard, &c. . . . and, after communion done from time to time, the same holy table to be placed where it stood before"; in the Advertisements of 1566, "that the common prayer be said or sung decently and distinctly in such place as the Ordinary shall think meet" (this interprets the Rubric); and in Canon 82 of 1604, "and (the Table shall) so stand" (it is not said where), "saving when the said holy communion is to be administered, at which time the

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same shall be placed . . . within the church or chancel."

According to the Injunctions the table was to stand ordinarily where the altar stood. But all the authorities contemplate a removal of the table at the time of celebration—to some spot within the chancel, say the Injunctions, within chancel or church, say the other three, and the Ordinary is to fix the exact spot where it is to stand when in use. Whether it was to be placed altar-wise or table-wise is a disputed question. But clearly it was not to be railed in.

The actual practice appears to have been that in all cathedrals, in the royal chapel at Westminster Abbey, of which Williams was dean, and in Williams' own chapel at Buckden, the table stood altar-wise at the east end of the chancel, while in most parish churches the table was "permanently established in the middle of the church or chancel." There can be no doubt that this latter usage led to great irreverence. In many cases the position of the table was not regarded as having any doctrinal significance, but in many cases it was attacked or defended as a convenient symbol for very divergent religious views.

In 1627 the acting vicar[1] of Grantham in Lincoln-

[1] There were two prebendaries in Grantham church, but they were removed to Salisbury Cathedral in 1091, where they now are. The two prebendaries were thenceforward represented by their two vicars of North and South Grantham, but of the two vicars only one appears to have resided. This arrangement lasted till 1713. I owe this information to the courtesy of the present Vicar of Grantham.

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shire, a fiery young man named Tytler, who had just excited the wrath of his parishioners by preaching a violent sermon in support of the forced loan, thought this the happy moment for stirring up ecclesiastical strife. The communion table at Grantham stood at the western end of the choir, just outside the rood-screen. Tytler called in workmen, moved the table inside the screen, and placed it at the east end. Alderman Wheatley, the chief magistrate of the town, bustled down to the church with a party of friends, and carried the table back to its old position. There was a scuffle in the church. Blows were struck, and Tytler told Wheatley "that he would build an altar of stone upon his own cost at the upper end of the choir, and set it with the ends north and south, altar-wise, and fix it there, that it might not be removed upon any occasion." Both sides appealed to Williams, the bishop.

Williams loved a stately service, and in his own chapel the table stood altar-wise at the east. But he had been a judge, he knew the law, he was well aware of the state of feeling in the eastern counties, which were very shortly afterwards the stronghold of the rebellion, and to a certain extent, in a moderate whiggish way, he sympathised with the political discontent. He took his stand upon his right as Ordinary to interpret the law, and ordered that the table, when not in use, should stand in the upper

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part of the chancel; when in use should either continue in the same place or be carried to any other part of the church or chancel where the minister could best be heard. The final question as to the advisability of removal, he reserved for consideration. It is not easy to find fault with this ruling. He went on to say, what is more questionable, that, even when placed at the east end, the table ought to stand not altar-wise, but table-wise. Finally, he wrote to the vicar: "Whether side soever, you or your parish, shall first yield unto the other in these needless controversies, shall remain in my poor judgment the more discreet, grave, and learned man of the two; and by that time that you shall have gained some more experience in the cure of souls, you shall find no such ceremony equal to Christian charity."[1]

In 1633 Williams repeated this decision in a similar case at Leicester. In the same year, in the newly restored church of St. Gregory, beside St. Paul's in London, the dean and chapter placed the table at the east end and set rails before it. The parishioners appealed to the Court of Arches, but the case was called before the king in Council. The Order in Council made upon the subject affirms the right of the Ordinary to decide, upheld the action of the dean and chapter, and administers a severe scolding to the five parishioners who had taken upon

[1] In the result the altar was allowed to remain as Tytler had placed it.

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themselves to complain.[1] But Laud, who was by this time archbishop, chose to interpret this particular Order as a general rule, and, as he knew that some of the bishops, including Williams, would not execute it, he subjected all his diocesan bishops to a Metropolitan Visitation, thereby suspending for a time their jurisdiction, and directed his vicar-general, Sir Nicholas Brent, to give orders that the holy table should in all cases be moved to the east end, and there railed in.

Williams, who had vainly protested against Laud's Visitation and the supersession of his diocesan jurisdiction, now did what it would perhaps have been more discreet to leave undone; and wrote a book, called *The Holy Table, Name, and Thing*, in defence of his theological views. Even his own friends thought that in some passages the style was "too light and merry," but he had been greatly affronted. Otherwise his position was one which would excite no surprise if maintained by a modern bishop. He was a strong episcopalian, though he did not consider that episcopacy was absolutely essential to the existence of a Church. He argued that the right phrase is Table not Altar, and justifies this contention on the ground that the latter term draws with it the notion of a repeated propitiatory sacrifice, whereas what we have in the

[1] See the Order in Gee and Hardy, No. 94.

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Eucharist is a commemoration of the one great Sacrifice. As to the position of the table, he concludes that "this liberty for a convenient place of church or chancel is left to the judgment of the Ordinary, and that the King in his princely Order about St. Gregory's church did leave it to the law, to the Communion Book, to the Canon and Diocesan." Laud put his satellite Heylin on to answer Williams' treatise, but the only point Heylin could make was that the table should stand altar-wise, and the minister place himself at the north end thereof. In this point he may have been right.

But Laud's own answer was given in the Star Chamber. Some time after the passing of the Petition of Right in 1628, Williams had had the honour of a private conversation with Charles in the palace, had urged the danger of pushing the Puritans into rebellion, and had drawn from the king some expressions which seemed to imply that his advice would not be neglected. On his return into Lincolnshire he had most indiscreetly given some account at table of what Charles had said to him on this occasion. For this he was now, after the lapse of eight years, arraigned in the Star Chamber for betraying the king's counsel, he being a sworn member of the Privy Council. The charge came to nothing, though pressed with virulence by Noye, the attorney to the crown, and Kilvert, the

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solicitor. In the course of these tortuous and oppressive proceedings, one Pregion, an important witness on the side of Williams, was represented as unworthy of credit, on the ground that he was the father of an illegitimate child. Williams' counsel got at the mother, and induced her to modify her affidavit, so as to rehabilitate the evidence of Pregion. For this, after the original prosecution had been dropped, Williams was again charged with subornation of perjury. He was fined £10,000, suspended from jurisdiction, and imprisoned in the Tower; and in the Tower he remained until he was released by the Long Parliament in 1640.

Laud's was undoubtedly the hand that pulled the wires in all these proceedings. They show his courage; he was afraid of no man, and struck at high and low alike; but they show also his amazing indiscretion. He was not content with merely gaining his ends, unless he could also trample down into the very mud every one who would not confess that he had been justly punished. Williams was not a bad man. He had his faults, though they were not so black as they were painted by Lord Clarendon, who expresses the hatred of the Bar for one who, though a layman, had for some years kept a professional lawyer out of the high prize of the Keepership. His real sin was his theological and political opposition; for this Laud was deter-

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mined to destroy him by any means that could be found.

Even those who do not like Williams can hardly deny that Laud's manner of going to work was calculated to evoke resistance and defiance. It is generally allowed that Laud was too stiffly legal. But the law which he enforced was in itself dubious. He went beyond his brief, even in the matter of the position of the holy table; and the Article (the twentieth) by which he justified his general conduct towards the Puritans was not beyond dispute. The affirmative clause had probably no parliamentary sanction, and, by the Subscription Act of 1571, the clergy were required to subscribe only to those Articles "which concern the confession of the true Christian Faith and the doctrine of the Sacraments."[1] Clearly it behoved him to be wary and moderate.

Probably, if the ecclesiastical dispute had stood by itself, all that Laud ought to have desired might easily have been attained, for it is evident from the conference at Hampton Court, and from the Resolutions on Religion presented by a committee of the House of Commons in 1629, that the Puritans were inclined to abandon a good many of their contentions. But by the latter date the position of the table was mixed up with tonnage and poundage, and the con-

[1] See the Act in Gee and Hardy, No. 83.

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troversy had ceased to be, in the strict sense of the word, religious.

It is curious to observe that the twentieth Article is now again assailed, but from a diametrically opposite quarter. The old Puritans argued that the Church had no power to ordain ceremonies not ordained by Scripture. In our own time some are disposed to maintain that it is not lawful, or at any rate that it is highly inexpedient, for a national Church to alter ceremonies that were adopted by the undivided Church. The objection seems to misconceive the way in which nearly all ceremonies came to exist. They were not ordered by the Church; they sprang up at first in particular localities. Sometimes they obtained general acceptance, sometimes they persisted in certain districts, sometimes they died out. Of the first class we may find an instance in the use of incense, of the second in the use of unleavened bread and of the unmixed chalice in Armenia, of the third in the usages of standing at prayer, of baptismal immersion, of administering milk and honey to the newly baptized. Some usages which were primeval and apostolic, such as extempore prayer in the Liturgy, the abstention from blood (this was ordered in the strongest of terms by the most venerable of all Councils), and, probably, the posture of sitting or lying at communion, have lapsed, we do not know when or how, by gradual

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cessation, one church after another adopting what seemed to be a better, more reasonable, more reverent custom. Ecclesiastical vestments again appear to have come gradually into use; the patterns were adapted from the ordinary outdoor attire of respectable people, and became distinctive only because the Church clung to them after the rest of the world had changed its fashions. In the New Testament we see that the white colour is regarded as especially religious, but as late as the time of Pope Celestine there were no ecclesiastical vestments at all.[1] May we not say that all points of ritual are temporal not eternal, decent, convenient, edifying, venerable in a greater or less degree, but not necessary or binding, except in so far as we may have promised to observe them?

They cannot, therefore, be regarded as an essential condition of unity. At the same time they form one of the natural adjuncts of unity. Every church must

[1] See Celestine's *Ep.* 4 in Coustant. The date is 428. Certain bishops in the dioceses of Vienna and Narbo had officiated in church dressed in some sort of a pallium bound round the waist by a leathern girdle. Celestine tells them, firstly, that, if they are trying to imitate John the Baptist, they are superstitious—we ought to obey Scripture in the spirit not in the letter; secondly, that this attire is not the dress of a gentleman. He goes on to say, "Discernendi a plebe vel cæteris sumus doctrina non veste, conversatione non habitu, mentis puritate non cultu." The evidence of an intelligent Pope may be accepted as conclusive on such a point. On the other hand, in the history of Gregory of Tours and the Epistles of Gregory the Great, about 600, we find certain garments regarded as distinctively clerical. In the interval the Barbarians had come in; the laity had adopted their breeches and tight-fitting coats; while the clergy had remained faithful to the flowing attire of the Roman gentleman. This seems to be in outline the history of this important change.

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have its rites, just as every army must have its uniform, and within the community it is certainly an offence for any member to rebel against them. St. Paul uses more imperious language against those who refused to veil their women than he does on more serious points. People, he seems to mean, ought to give way on such matters. If they will not conciliate their brethren in trifles, how can they be expected to respect greater obligations? Probably this is the thought that underlies the Apostle's emphatic words: "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God."

But the catastrophe of Archbishop Laud ought to teach us three serious practical lessons. There can never be any peace on ritual matters unless it is frankly recognised on all sides that they are in themselves absolutely indifferent. Secondly, all symbolism is liable to great dangers; it may be deliberately enhanced in order to accentuate doctrines which are disputed, and then with some it will become a point of conscience to resist; or it may lead to the very evil which it is designed to cure, for some people find it not a help to devotion but a hindrance. It should not then be ambiguous, and it should not be excessive. Thirdly, it must be regulated by law; we must not imitate Laud in going beyond the law, even to serve what we may think a wise and beneficial purpose.

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May we add, fourthly, that the law in question is a religious law, and that it should be executed as by religious men in the spirit, and not in slavish adherence to the letter. The general teaching of the Prayer Book ought not to be overstepped, but neither ought its formularies to be narrowed.[1] There is ample space within its borders. Some cry for greater freedom; but the Fathers of the English Reformation drew the lines of their city with as liberal a hand as Constantine when he marked out the walls of his new capital. And what men mean by greater freedom is often less freedom; it would admit none that are not already within, and it would exclude some who have a right to remain.

[1] It may very well be thought that the Ornaments Rubric was narrowed by the Purchas judgment. As to the chasuble, it may be observed that Silvia, the mother of Gregory the Great, wore one. See the interesting description of her portrait given by John the Deacon, iv. 83. See also illustration 144 in Lowrie, *Christian Art and Archæology*, p. 332. The mystical meanings attached to this garment are all late and all fanciful.

THE END

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